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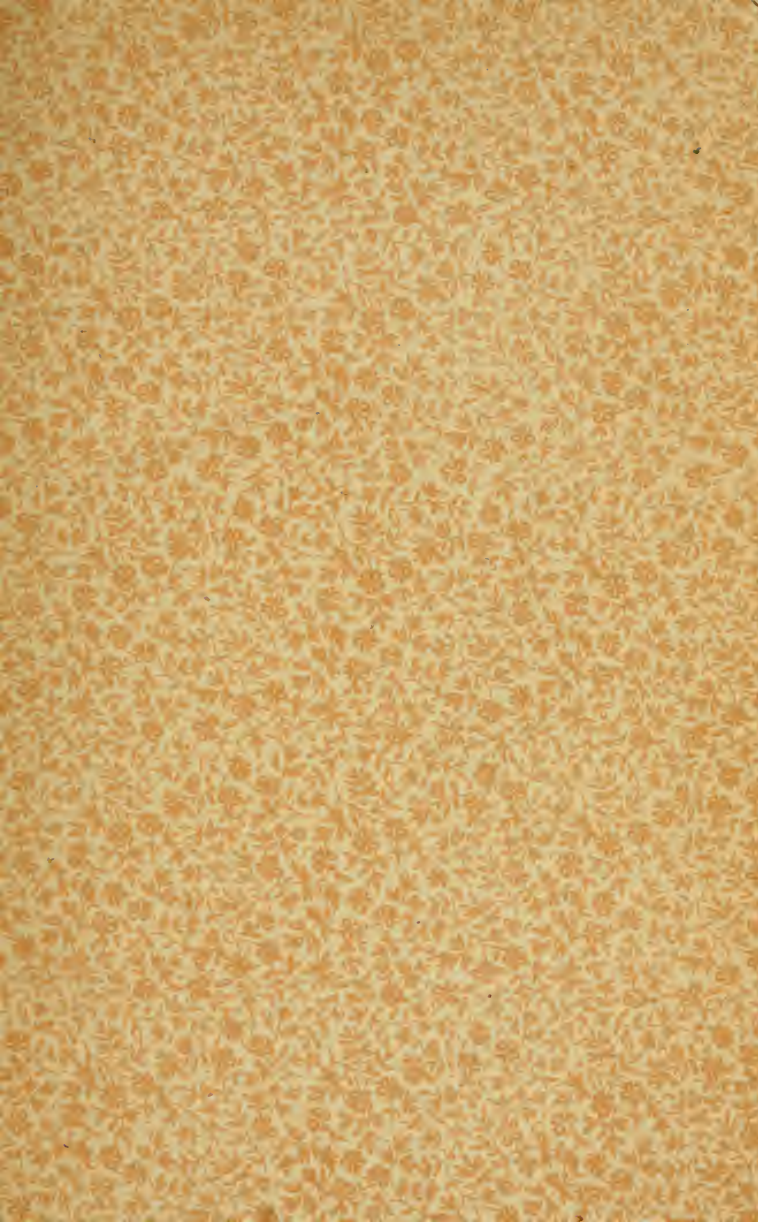
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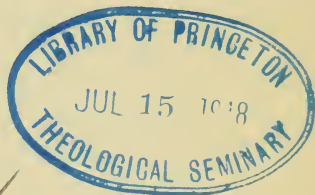


Yours sincerely

J. Reynolds Hole.

ADDRESSES

*SPOKEN TO WORKING MEN FROM PULPIT
AND PLATFORM.*



BY

S. REYNOLDS HOLE,

DEAN OF ROCHESTER.

"Think deeply, then, O man,
How great thou art;
Pay thyself homage
With a trembling heart."

New York:
THOMAS WHITTAKER,
2 & 3 BIBLE HOUSE.

INSCRIBED
TO
THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,
WITH THE KIND ASSENT OF HIS GRACE,
AND
WITH THE AUTHOR'S MOST SINCERE RESPECT AND LOVE.

THE DEANERY, ROCHESTER,

February, 1894.

P R E F A C E .

I SHOULD not of my own accord have published these Addresses, because I cannot expect from those who may read them the sympathy evoked by the living voice ; but I am persuaded by the sweet importunities and hopeful encouragements of many friends whom I trust.

S. REYNOLDS HOLE.

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ADDRESSES TO WORKING MEN.

I.

DO YOU READ THE BIBLE ?

“ Search the Scriptures.”—ST. JOHN v. 39.

Do you read the Bible ? It seems a strange question to Christians in a Christian church—to those who profess to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, the record of the only salvation.

But is there not a cause ? In the main street of this or any other city, in how many houses should we find Bibles showing signs of constant use ? I see, here and there, a volume splendidly bound, and illustrated with engravings (poor engravings, for the art of the Painter in England is no longer the handmaid of religion); but these books manifestly are for ornament, and not for use. An old preacher replied to the question of a young clergyman, “ Which is the best sermon you have ever heard or read ? ” “ The Sermon on the Mount.” And yet how many run to

and fro to hear a sermon from the servant, and how few sit at the Master's feet!

We hear a great deal about the preaching of the Gospel—the Bible, and the Bible only; but is it not too often the Gospel of a particular school or preacher, and not the Gospel according to the Evangelists? How rarely do we read the discourses of St. Peter or St. Paul in comparison with those of human thought! Surely this unwillingness to search the Scriptures is a mystery of iniquity, as fearful as it is strange. I remember asking a converted Jew in conversation what argument he thought most likely to convince his brethren. "Oh," he said, "the study of the Scriptures—Moses and the Prophets; but they will not read them. They will peruse the Rabbinical writings and the traditions of the elders, but not the Scriptures." The explanation is not hard to find; in the Old Testament, "Thou hatest instruction, and hast cast My words behind thee;" "My people would not hear My voice;" and in the New, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for *reproof*, for *correction*, for instruction in righteousness."

Even of those who read, how many do this as a duty rather than as a delight, without prayer before or meditation after! How many read in a spirit of controversy!—not to learn, but to teach; not to reform themselves, but to refute or to rebuke their neighbours. And of those who insist upon the Bible, and the Bible only,—how often, when we come to an

investigation of their knowledge, do we find a very superficial and partial acquaintance with the Sacred Truth! Again, men are full of excuses. They have "no time to search the Scriptures," but plenty of time for the novel or the newspaper. Some say they are no scholars. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; I cannot attain unto it." But no scholarship is required. On the contrary, we are divinely assured that God giveth wisdom to the simple; that knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And so one of the holiest of men, and one of those most learned in the Scriptures, St. Augustine, writes, "When I was young, I came to the study of the Bible with the shrewdness of dispute, and not with the meekness of inquiring; so it was that by my own perverseness I saw the door of Scripture closed against myself. And why? Because I sought with pride for what can only be found by humility."

Then the question is asked, "Why should we read the Bible more than the Koran, or the sacred books of other religions?" We are not to shut our eyes to all that is true and beautiful in other creeds, or to be constantly denouncing them as hindrances to Christianity. Nor must we forget who it was who said, that many should come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and should sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the children of the kingdom should be cast out. On the other hand, we must bear in mind that all which is most attractive

in other religions is either borrowed from or resembles Christianity. There is no comparison, for example, as to the character of Christ and Mohammed, or as to their teaching. Mohammed erred, and never concealed his liability to err. Christ was holy, harmless, undefiled, and the most malignant enemy was silent when He asked, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" There is no comparison between the Bible and the Koran. The latter cannot be translated harmoniously into other languages; the Bible adapts itself to all. The Mussulman discourages, the Christian rejoices in, translation.

Why should you read the Bible? Because it is impossible that so many different authors, writing at various times and at a distance from each other, could have agreed upon such momentous subjects without a common inspiration. It is impossible that men, speaking different languages, in diverse times and climes, could have designed a system of religion at unity in itself. Nor is it likely that human wisdom would have composed a scheme so totally opposed to human nature, which humbles our pride, thwarts our passions, and bids us refuse and despise those things which the world loves best. All false religions have many adaptations and concessions to human infirmity; but Christianity bids us mortify our members which are upon the earth; and Christ says, "If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross, and follow."

The very existence of the Bible should induce us

to read it; its preservation and continuity, refulments for ever of our Lord's promise, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away." Would a falsehood have been preserved for three thousand years? The kings of the earth and its rulers, the teachers of human philosophy, the oppositions of science—falsely so called—have striven in vain to destroy it. And "it stands this day, amid the wreck of all that is human, without the alteration of one sentence so as to change the doctrine which is taught therein."* Voltaire predicted that there would be no Bible in the nineteenth century. "In less than a hundred years," he said, "Christianity will have been swept from existence." Voltaire is no longer read; but copies of the Bible are multiplied by the million, and two hundred and six translations have been distributed since 1804.

The Bible is manifestly inspired, because no human cleverness can foretell the future; because "the prophecy came not in the old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and because the prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled, some of them in its own, and some in the New Testament records. We should read the Bible, because it is adapted to all men and all moods, in every time and clime. It has been well said that the Bible is a river which has depths in which a giant may swim, and shallows which may be crossed by a child.

* Bishop Jewell.

“If thou art merry, here are airs ;
If melancholy, here are prayers ;
If studious, here are those things writ
Which may deserve thy ablest wit.
If hungry, here is food divine ;
If thirsty, nectar, heavenly wine.”

Theology is the queen of sciences, and the student of the sacred Scriptures finds daily new subjects for his admiration ; and yet the simple rustic sees heaven as clearly before him, and the road as free and open, as the most erudite and ascetic of the saints. Henry Martyn took the highest honours which Cambridge could give ; but when his mind was open to understand the Scriptures, his scholarship seemed to be in comparison but vanity and vexation of spirit. And so the cottage dame, “who knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,” holds in her hand the same passport to Paradise.

“And in that Charter reads with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a mansion in the skies.”

Charles Dickens wrote, “The New Testament is the best book that ever was, or ever will be, known in the world ; and it teaches you the best lessons by which any human creature, who tries to be faithful and truthful to duty, can possibly be guided.”

We should read the Bible, because it is a proclamation of the only true liberty, true equality, true love, true wisdom ; because here we find the only explanation of sorrow, sickness, death, and eternity, of the cause, consequence, and cure of sin ; the only history which reveals to us the origin and object of our

existence, the beginning and the ending of this world in which we live. True liberty, not licence to do every man that which seemeth right in his own eyes, but the glorious liberty wherewith Christ has made us free from the slavery of the world, the flesh, and the devil. True equality, which we only realize when we regard our fellow-men as alike dear to our Father which is in heaven, our Saviour who died for all, and the Holy Spirit which is given to every man to profit withal. A proclamation of love, which unites all sorts and conditions of men in the unity of spirit, the bond of peace, and the righteousness of life. A proclamation of wisdom; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and only by His revelation can we be made wise unto salvation.

How are we to read the Bible? Take heed "*how* ye hear." "*Search* the Scriptures." That does not mean reading hastily; it means listening reverently to God's words—"Speak, Lord; for Thy servant heareth"—after prayer* and then keeping them, as the Holy Mother kept them, and pondering them in the heart. Not merely remembering, but revering. There are many now who, like the scribes and dissenters in our Lord's time, have a large knowledge of the Scriptures, can argue and quote texts, but who, as St. Peter wrote, "may wrest the Scriptures to

* For example, the Collect for the Second Sunday in Advent; or, "O Lord, open Thou mine eyes, that I may see the wonderful things of Thy Law."

their own destruction." God's Word may be spoken by the lips, but not written in the heart. The seed, which is the Word of God, must be sown in the soil prepared to receive it—the honest and good heart of faithful and obedient love; love of Him who, on the first Easter day, went with the two disciples to Emmaus, and opened their understanding that they might understand the Scripture. We must receive with meekness the engrafted Word, for the Word preached or read will not profit unless it be mixed with faith. Reason leads us to the door, but then faith takes us by the hand and guides us heavenward. "The time comes," Lord Bacon writes, "when reason must leave the pinnacle of human learning and embark by faith in the ark of Christ's Church, which alone has the true sea-needle."

On the tomb of the great American statesman, Daniel Webster, is inscribed the text, "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." There are some in our day who, while they profess and call themselves Christians, and declare that their only object is the discovery and confirmation of truth, seem to derive more satisfaction in finding out anachronisms and contradictions and mistakes, rather than arguments and proofs of inspiration; who take more interest in subjects which "minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith;" who seem to be more interested in the names of writers and the dates of their writing, their style, and minor details, than in the divine promises, warnings, and instruc-

tions which they were commissioned to announce to mankind. Ignoring the Apostolic caution, that no Scripture is of private interpretation, "that the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," these writers do not hesitate to tell us that the Church has been teaching over eighteen centuries as divine truths, myths, allegories, fond things vainly invented. They seem to expect us only to believe that which they dictate to us, and to disbelieve whatever they may dispute. We are to have an "Index Expurgatorius," new canons, and new creeds. The ancient fathers, martyrs, confessors, bishops, and doctors, with their contemporaries in all Christendom, have been under a delusion.

The Church has never promulgated any theory of inspiration, but she remains the pillar and ground of the truth. She teaches that Holy Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, but she does not teach that in matters of minor importance there are no mistakes. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, and so St. Austin wrote to St. Jerome, "I confess I have learned to pay this reverence and honour only to those books of Scripture which are called canonical, that I most firmly believe none of the authors of them was guilty of any error in writing; and if I find anything in those books which seems contrary to truth, I make no doubt but that it is either a corruption of the copy, or that the translator did not hit the sense, or that I myself could not understand it."

The saints of old spent not their time in examining

the casket or the setting, but in admiring the pearl of great price—the truth as it is in Jesus. They knew of the human element, but they did not proclaim it from the housetops for the world to say, “There, there! so would we have it!” to discourage the doubtful and to make the hearts of the righteous sad. Their object was not to reform the Scriptures, but to be reformed by them; not to hew out new cisterns, but to draw living water from the old; not to make new ways to heaven, but to ask for the old paths wherein is the good way, and to walk therein, that so they might find rest for their souls. And thus, as Pascal writes, “everything tends to the advantage of the elect—even the obscurities of the Scripture, for they honour them the more on account of the divine clearness of other parts; while, on the contrary, everything tends to evil with unbelievers, even those clearer portions themselves, for they blaspheme all the Scriptures on account of the obscurities which perplex them. “The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.” “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.” “I am wiser than the aged, because I keep Thy commandments.” “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.”

“Avoid foolish questions, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.” When Melancthon came from the Diet of

Spires to visit his mother at Brunnen, she said, "What am I to do? What am I to believe, my son, in this time of division and debate?" And the answer was, "Believe and pray as heretofore; take no heed of controversy." "Live your Bible," says Ruskin, "and your doubts will cease."

Take this home as the golden rule for the right use of Holy Scripture, "Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only." Be not as the butterflies which go from flower to flower, but as the bees which gather the honey. "Search the Scriptures," saying, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Prayerfully, faithfully, commune with your Creator, Saviour, and Guide—your Guide unto death, the Friend that loveth at all times, the Brother born for adversity, who has made this promise to you and me, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Study with reverent admiration the only perfect Example.

The Greeks had a sculptor named Polycletus, who carved in marble the statue of a man, so perfect in its proportions that it was accepted by his brethren as their model, and was known as the Rule of Polycletus. God has given us a perfect Model, and shown us in the Holy Scriptures how by His grace we may try to copy it. It is not to be done at once, as when metal is poured into mould, but here a little and there a little—as with the sculptor chip by chip. Patience and self-denial must have their perfect work.

“The best of men
That e’er wore earth about him was a sufferer ;
A sweet, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit.
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.”

My brother, sinful, helpless, dying, there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. And you may die to-night. Only this Book can teach you so to live that you may dread the grave as little as your bed ; teach you to die that so you may rise glorious at the awful day.

II.

CHRISTIANITY AND COMMON SENSE.

LET me offer to you, my brothers, to-night, a few suggestions concerning Christianity and Common Sense. There are some who do not hesitate to say that these are contrary the one to the other; that they contradict, hinder, and interfere with each other; that, even supposing that they are both good and right in themselves, they must be kept distinct and separate; that there is no grace of congruity between them. Some say, I know what common sense means, but Christianity is to me a mystery. They say, with Sancho Panza, "I was not bred in courts, nor have I studied at Salamanca, but I understand myself." I've plenty of common sense, but I can't understand religion; such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it. So they make their want of scholarship, as they call it, their ignorance of theology (which is, of course, the grandest of all the sciences, but which is nevertheless in comparison with practical Christianity as an erudite treatise upon agriculture to a field of ripe

golden wheat); they plead want of knowledge for want of faith, and make it an excuse for a selfish sensual life. They would be very angry if *you* talked about their ignorance, and they have a positive opinion to give on most subjects, not excluding this, of which, when it suits their convenience, they profess to know nothing, *i.e.* religion.

Theology! No man by searching can find out God. His kingdom cometh not by observation. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine. He giveth wisdom unto the simple.

Others affirm, on the contrary, that common sense, which is identical with reason, mind, intellect, has reached heights of wisdom from which it looks down upon religion, as one sees from a mountain the ruins of an abbey in the vale below, a mere outline of beauty, just the suggestion of a noble purpose, quickly crumbling to decay. Seen in the marvellous microscope of science, and in the brilliancy of its electric light, Christianity, they tell us, is discovered to be a fond thing vainly invented, a charming allegory, but no longer applicable, if it ever was so, to the practical purpose of life. Wherefore it shall be my earnest, thoughtful, prayerful endeavour to show, as best I may, that there is a complete agreement between Christianity and common sense; that they are united and inseparable; and that they are alike intelligible and practicable to those who really try to understand and to enforce them.

My object in thus attempting to demonstrate the union which exists between reason and faith, between the head and the heart, is to dispel that which I believe to be error, and to promote that which I believe to be truth. My claims upon your attention are the experience of a varied life and a great desire, which comes to me from that love of my fellow-men which Christianity alone imparts, to comfort others in this world of sorrow and of sin, by the comfort wherewith I myself am comforted of God.

What do we mean by common sense? With a considerable number of persons common sense means uncommon nonsense; it means, "If you don't think as I think, say as I say, do as I do, you must be a born fool," and this they call free thought, liberty of speech, independent action. Common sense with them means "my sense"—"My doxy is orthodoxy, yours is heterodoxy; that which I understand is all that a man need know, and what I don't understand is bosh." Like the Saracen conqueror who burned the greatest library in the world, stored with the wisdom of ages, "because," said he, "I don't understand letters, and therefore they must be bad and worthless." They live in a fool's paradise, and think that all others envy and admire; somewhat resembling that Emperor of Tartary, of whom it is recorded that when he proceeded to feed on horseflesh he sent one of his attendants to make a proclamation outside his tent that all the kings and potentates of the world had his permission to begin their dinners.

Some say it is common sense to get what you can, as you can, and use it as you like. "Let him take that hath the power, and let him keep who can"—after the manner of the big navy in the village cricket-match, who, when the umpire gave him "out" at an interesting crisis in the game, walked quietly up to that functionary, and, without entering into particulars, knocked him down. Some affirm that it is common sense only to accept that which we can touch or look at—"seeing is believing"—and profess to ignore whatsoever is beyond the range of hand and eye. We read, for example, that C. R. Carlisle, an infidel, "advised people, in reference to religious matters generally, to believe nothing without the strongest possible demonstration. In fact, he went so far as to advise them to believe nothing in religion without ocular demonstration, or, in other words, nothing but what they could see with their eyes. He did at the same time show that he expected people to believe him on his bare word. He had no wish that they should ask for ocular demonstration, or for demonstrations of any kind in favour of atheistical views. Atheistical views he wished them to receive on his own unsupported testimony; Christian views he wished them to receive on no testimony whatever." All that he believes (so far as negation can be called belief) must be true, all that I believe must be false. But no one acts or can act upon such a silly profession.

What is there, which you and I do, which is not

an act of faith in the unseen? "Reason would never submit, if it did not perceive that there were occasions when it ought to submit, *i.e.* to faith."*

What would you think of the man who would not get out of bed in the morning because he could not see his breakfast waiting for him in the room below? And when he does see his cup of hot coffee, what induces him to hope that it isn't all chicory? Faith in his grocer. What encourages him to think that his basin of milk is not "the joint produce of the cow and the pump"? Faith in the milkman.

Others, on the contrary, seem to regard common sense as an easy, unsuspecting credulity, which accepts as truth whatever is stated with a loud and confident assertion—like the rustic who was indignant when his companion seemed to doubt the announcements which the showman made through his trumpet, "Do you think as the gentleman ud say as the giant wor nine foot high if he worn't nine foot high, spooney?" And such men as these, "good easy men, full sure," have an implicit faith in majorities. But public history, and private experiences, yours and mine, are evidences that majorities err not seldom.

At an election, for instance, it must seem to you, according to your politics, that a large number of constituencies who have returned candidates adverse to your opinion are opaque, crass, and benighted. The majority of the House of Commons had complete confidence in their common sense when they

* St. Augustine, quoted by Pascal.

made merry at the statement that passengers might be conveyed by steam power at the rate of twelve miles an hour. Before and since those days in which the men of Lystra desired to worship Paul and Barnabas, and not many hours after took up stones to stone them, there have been crowds which first crowned their heroes with laurels and subsequently treated those same heads with no more respect than if they had been cocoanuts or effigies of Aunt Sally, exposed to the attacks of the public at six shots a penny. Ah, well has our king-poet said—

“Oh, momentary grace of mortal men,
Which we more hunt for than the grace of God;
Who builds his hope in air of your fair looks,
Lives, like a drunken sailor on a mast,
Ready with every nod to tumble down.”

Where, then, dissatisfied with the descriptions to which I have referred, shall we obtain such an accurate definition as will commend itself to all? I would suggest the definition which has been given of truth itself,—that which has been accepted always, everywhere, and by all. I would define common sense to be the consensus of thoughtful men throughout the ages, the unanimous verdict of the experience of life, the effluence of principles which cannot change, expressing itself in proverbs which convince the world.

If it can be shown that there is not only an exact agreement between this common sense, so defined, and Christianity, but that revelation is the development of reason, leading us from the finite to the infinite, a

light unto our feet and a lantern unto our paths when the mind is wandering in the dark—especially when all those who have made it in an honest and good heart entreat us to follow their example, not only with their lips but by their lives; why, then it must be clearly the wildest and most perilous of all follies to neglect so great a salvation. So now to our tests.

The common sense of humanity craves for happiness; it sighs, “O Happiness, our being’s end and aim!” and considering the varied circumstances in which we are placed, it differs little in its idea of happiness,—health, plenty, independent freedom, successful work, the love of those around us. Experiments which have been made everywhere, in all time as now, to find happiness in mere selfishness, in eating and drinking, in the gratification of fleshly lusts, in idleness, in getting money anyhow we can, in having our own way, have failed to find it, as they fail to-day.

“Rapt Antony in reckless love pursued her,
Brutus in glory, Cæsar in dominion:—
The first found shame, the next satiety,
The last ingratitude—and all destruction.”

The world has always seen that which it sees now; it has seen “sorrow dogging sin.” When men have well drunk of its pleasures, then that which is worse—“the wine which showeth its colour in the cup, when it moveth aright, at the last biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder.” The head aches longer than the throat is pleased, and a man’s heaviness,

which may have been refreshed long before it came to drunkenness, when it arrives thither has but exchanged one sorrow for another, and taken a sin to boot.* The painted face, which looked so fair smiling in the lamplight, is haggard and wretched by the light of day.

Yes, the world has always seen what it sees now, in so many homes, hospitals, asylums, gaols, and workhouses—poverty, and misery, and disgrace, disease, corruption, consumption, paralysis, following upon drunkenness, lust, and sloth. So that wise men in all climes and times have left this as the result of their observations—that he who would find happiness in this world must seek it in something better, higher, nobler, purer than mere animal pleasures—the mere gratification of self. The most patient and profound thinkers of this world, notably the great philosophers of Greece and Rome, have unanimously recorded their belief that there was a right and a wrong—a false and a true—and that he who would know such happiness as this world can give could only learn it in the schools of thought and duty. “Set your mind on wisdom and on doing good to your country and to your fellows, and you will find the best life to be the happiest.”† Even Epicurus, though his teaching and his life were so corrupt, yet professed his belief that life without virtue could not be happy; and thousands confessed with the queen in the tragedy, “I know that I am doing that which

* Jeremy Taylor.

† Seneca.

is wicked, but my passion overpowers my principle. I am conscious of the right; I do the wrong." And all the religions of the world, just as they have evidenced their approximations or departures from divine truth, by ennobling or degrading the lives of those who professed them, have taught more or less earnestly that happiness consisted in these endeavours to eschew evil and to do good.

However deformed by those proofs of their human origin, which the author of "*Juventus Mundi*," in speaking of the Olympian system, has so aptly termed "depraved accommodations" (as, for example, in the religion of Islam, founded by Mahomet, the Mussulman substitutes formalism and self-righteousness for heart-worship and humility), yet they have ever associated the happier with the better life. So in the religion of Buddha, when a Deva inquired from him, "How many men, when they were yearning for happiness, have held various things to be blessings; do thou declare to us the chief good,"—he answered, "It comes to us in good works, right desires of the heart, self-control and pleasant speech, love of parents, wife, and children, almsgiving, temperance, reverence, contentment, patience, resignation." And it is because Christianity, being divine, cannot condone error, but must speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, because it comes to us from Him, the Author of all happiness, that we find in our love for its Founder, and in our obedience to His precepts, the nearest approach to pure happiness which we can

know on earth ; in foretastes, gleams, intimations of that sweet peace and felicity which man had in Eden, has in Paradise, and will have for ever in Heaven.

Now, entering more into detail, and in endeavouring to state the arguments of common sense as fairly and fully as I can, I would endeavour to show that Christianity is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come ; that it not only withholds no good thing from us, nothing which is really good, but introduces us to much which we should not otherwise know ; that it forbids no enjoyments except those which must end in pain, and that every duty which it enjoins, which, though for the present it seemeth not joyous but grievous, nevertheless afterwards worketh the recompense of a sure reward.

First, we are assured by our common sense that health is an indispensable element of happiness ; and accepting this as a rule (with signal exceptions), I would ask in what book shall we find the sure laws of health so plainly set forth as in the New Testament—in Christianity ? What keeps mind and body strong and sound ? Why, those habits of temperance (not in drink only—St. Paul says, “he that striveth for the mastery is temperate in *all* things”—in his language, for example, and in his self-esteem), that regular employment of our abilities in our daily duty, that cheerful contentment, which are everywhere taught by precept and example in the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And so it comes to pass under this new covenant, as under the old, the voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous, "the hearts of them rejoice that seek the Lord," and the Apostle quotes the Psalmist to show that he who would love life and see good days, must depart from evil and do good, seek, not pleasure but, peace. Now, as when Solomon spoke it, "the sleep of the labouring man is sweet," and "the abundance of the rich," the superabundance, which he might have shared with others, "will not suffer him to sleep." It is just as true now as then, that the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness clothe a man with rags. Solomon says, "The idle soul shall suffer hunger." St. Paul says, "If a man will not work, neither shall he eat." "Oh, but," it may be said, "there are scores of idle folks who never suffer from hunger; there are lots of people who don't work who have plenty to eat." But does any one with common sense suppose for a moment that the idle man, or rather the animal—for he is not a man who never uses his mind or his muscles, who does no manner of work—that he has the same enjoyment of his food as the man who earns it? What is the main object of all those Worcestershire and Harvey sauces, those ketchups and pick-me-ups, those anchovies and cayenne peppers, but to titilate the palates and stimulate the torpid appetites of idle greedy men? Three-fourths of the ailments which afflict the body result from excess in eating and drinking; and German spas and Harrogate waters and

Turkish baths, and all the establishments for starving and sweating, had never been known if Christians had regulated their diet by the rules of Christianity.

Do you remember the wise word of Stephenson, the great engineer, when there was a discussion in his presence as to the use of strong medicine and the power of the lancet?—"Never waste your steam, never waste your steam; rake out your fire, rake out your fire." Better still he might have added, "Don't make your fire too hot, or there will be an explosion, brain-disease, heart-disease, dropsy, delirium." Yet when common sense and Christianity both say to us, "Prevention is better than cure," we profess to assent, but in act deny it.

Reason and religion tell us that moderation, self-denial, abstinence, are good both for body and soul, but we will have nothing to do with them until a surfeit or a sickness takes away the appetite, or the doctor threatens and alarms. If we Christians were true to our vows, if we kept our word with God as we keep it with our fellow-men, if, as we were taught in childhood, we kept our bodies in temperance, soberness, and chastity, we should need no solemn pledges, and no blue ribbons in our coats, to restrain us from excess.

Again, common sense tells us we must have the means of preserving health. We must have enough for our needs. And does not religion concur? I have heard men of business and I have heard working men speak as though Christianity was opposed to buying and selling, and getting gain; but I find its

Founder, on the contrary, commending those who had gained by trading, and condemning the man who had made no use or increase of his capital.

Religion says to us, get as much wealth as you can, but get it honestly; because a false balance, a false sample, a false brand, is abomination unto the Lord; because, as it is written, a faithful man, a man "whom you can trust," shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich, he who is not satisfied with a fair profit, a fair wage, he who speculates and gambles, "shall not be innocent." Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, that useth his neighbour's service without wage! Christianity forbids no man to get wealth, but it does forbid him from loving it for its own sake, from hoarding it, from spending it on self. It shows the rich man a thousand ways in which, giving back to Him who giveth all, he may consecrate his riches to the glory of his God and the happiness of his fellow-men, and may change his gold and silver for an inheritance incorruptible, safe in the treasuries of heaven. It is with money as with all things else, it has its use and abuse. If men spend it wisely and generously, they are happier in the happiness of others. They know one of the sweetest pleasures which can be had on earth, "the luxury of doing good;" but Shakespeare says to the man who heaps up riches for himself—

"If thou art rich, thou'rt poor;

Like the poor ass whose back's with ingots bound,
Thou bear'st thy heavy burden but a journey,
And death unloadeth thee."

"I was a far happier man," said one of our great merchants, "when I was a poor clerk in Liverpool, with £50 a year, than I am now with my great mansions, and servants, and carriages, and horses, and half a million of money." And another, whose health was undermined by his restless craving for riches, "Oh, believe me, you may buy gold too dear." It is not what a man has, but what he is, that makes him happy. "A man's life," our Lord declares to us, "consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesses." His real, true, happy life consists in being satisfied with what he has, and making the best of it. And it is Christianity alone which teaches a man to say, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

One morning, as I was going into church for our daily service, an old man, whom I had known and esteemed for many years, as a most sincere, consistent, humble-minded Christian, always bright and cheerful, though infirm and very poor, came to me leaning on his two sticks, and said, "If you please, sir, could you say that thanksgiving prayer this morning, for I'm eighty years old to-day, and I should like to give thanks to God for all the mercies He has sent to me." Not many weeks ago that old man died, and the last words he spoke to me as I sat by his bedside were these: "I'm not dying in darkness; I'm dying in the Light of Life." I ask common sense, is it not worth while to make trial of a religion which through a long life "gratefully receives what

Heaven has sent, and rich in poverty enjoys content," and which brings a man such peace at the last?

In addition to health, competence, and contentment, it is the verdict of public opinion, that is, of our common sense, that there can be no real happiness without freedom from anything like slavery—liberty of thought, word, and action. Christianity not only endorses this conviction, but it explains what real independence is, and puts it within reach of all. First of all, it does away with shams and counterfeits, rubs the varnish off the rotten wood, and the electroplate from the pewter. It shows us that "he is a freeman, whom the Truth makes free, and all are slaves beside." They may rule kingdoms, command armies, have great houses full of servants, great factories full of operatives; but if they cannot rule their passions, govern their tempers, they are slaves to the hardest of all masters, and the most cruel of all tyrants—they are the servants of sin. They may boast of their liberty, just as the Jews said they were never in bondage to any man, when they were not only under a Roman Governor, but tied and bound with the chains of ignorance and its twin brother pride. As under the cap of liberty there has been bloodshed, and burning, and pillage; as a man may call himself a free and independent elector who has just got £2 for his vote; as we hear men singing "Rule Britannia" in our streets, and that "Britons never, never, never, never shall be slaves,"

when they are abject menials of drink—so there are multitudes who talk of freedom who don't know, or rather won't know, what it is to be free, for he that committeth sin is the servant of sin—the most degrading slavery of all, which “drags at each remove a lengthening chain.” How it separates a man from his manliness! How it silences “the merry laugh of boyhood”! How it destroys the blushing beauty of girlhood—the “shame which is a glory and grace”!

A cruel yoke and hard weight of servitude it is to be subject to the things of time, to be ambitious of the things of earth, to cling to falling things, to seek to stand on things that stand not, to desire things that pass away, but to be unwilling to pass away with them. For while all things fly away against our wish, those things which had at first harassed the mind in desire of gaining them, now oppress it with fear of losing them.*

What a mean object is that boisterous Briton reeling homeward to his sick wife and starving children! What a despicable, deceitful sneak is that seducer who designs the ruin of his neighbour's daughter, or the dishonour of his wife! What evil schemes are in his heart! What hypocrisies in his acts! What lies on his lips! What hiding and prowling in the dark! for “the way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble.” And all the while the fearful apprehensions of discovery, of the father's, the husband's vengeance, of

* St. Gregory.

public exposure and contempt; all the while a gloomy consciousness that their life is false and wrong.

My brothers, men disgusted with sin, seeking pardon and peace, seeking a Saviour, open their hearts sometimes to us His ministers, and they tell us such things as these: "I remember the time when I shrank from kissing my own little daughter—I felt so polluted and foul; I remember when I went home one night and found my wife, with whom I had dealt so treacherously, kneeling by her bedside in prayer. *I felt as if God struck me.*"

Who, then, is free? I repeat the promise of the Master, "The truth shall make you free," and I testify to its fulfilment with all true believers: "He that is called in the Lord, though he be a servant, is the Lord's freeman," for the service of God is perfect freedom. He is free who, with a conscience void of offence towards God and man, is striving to do his duty to both. The only perfect liberty is the glorious liberty of the children of God. The only real independence is that which "looks the whole world in the face, and owes not any man;" which does not care to ask in an anxious wonderment, What will folks think? what will neighbours say? because it weighs its motives and measures its actions by the scales and standards of God. It is not afraid of the scornful reproof of the wealthy, nor of the despatchfulness of the proud,—never afraid to speak the truth and to stand up for the right. They who have this true liberty know better than to do homage and

service to a world which, were they to die to-morrow, would think itself every whit as well, and go on quite as merrily, without them. "Their death a nine days' wonder," as yours and mine will be. But what of that, if the part which cannot die is safe for eternity?

Common sense suggests another element of happiness—the good will of our fellow-men. A man may profess to disregard it, and may set his hat on one side and put his hands in his pockets, and sing with the Scotch miller, "I care for nobody, and nobody cares for me;" but he is a gregarious animal, and must have sympathies. To be happy he must love and be loved. But you cannot buy love, for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. You may buy admiration, praise, adulation; but you cannot buy love. Common sense longs for it, but cannot find it. Philosophy never defined it. Philanthropy lives in the precincts, but has not entered the shrine. Only religion, Christianity, tells us what it is and bestows it. It is the communion of the soul rising heavenward in thankful adoration unto Him who made, who redeemed, and who sanctifies. "We love Him, because He first loved us;" and then "this commandment have we from Him, that we who love God love our brother also." It is the communion of the heart with its fellow-men in a sympathy which includes them all. Because Christianity alone reveals to us the dignity and the danger of each individual soul.

When I realize how precious my own life is ("when I survey the wondrous Cross"), and see the price that has been paid to save it, and when at the same time I am conscious that I may neglect and lose so great a salvation; when I contrast the divine intentions with my feeble selfish life; when I contrast what has been with what might have been done; when I think of the failures of the past and the temptations of the present;—why, then I realize the worth and the peril of your soul, my brother; of every living man in His sight, who is no respecter of persons, and I seem to have a brother's sadness in your sorrows, and a brother's gladness in your hopes. And this love creates love. Like a bugle among the hills and dales, it "sets the echoes flying." To be at enmity with God is to be at enmity with man. "When I was in opposition to Thee," writes a saint, "I was contrary to myself and to all men." *

Acquaint, therefore, thyself with Him, and be at peace. Seek His love; for all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto it. It is to all mere human affection as the daylight to a taper's flame; nay, it is brighter, warmer than the sun itself, for it is the smile of a loving God.

* St. Bernard.

III.

WORK.

“To every man his work.”—ST. MARK xiii. 34.

I HAVE spoken of work, successful work, as being, according to the common sense, the consensus, of intelligent men, a chief element of human happiness. What does Christianity teach? The working men heard Christ gladly, not only because He was one of themselves, and they had seen Him at the carpenter's bench, with the saw and the hammer in His hand, but because He taught by precept and example the duty and the dignity and the happiness of work.

The civilization and philosophy of Greece and Rome regarded with disdain the hewers of wood and drawers of water; rich men treated their “slaves,” as they called them, as mere machines and beasts of burden, and they laughed at Cicero when he spoke, with tears in his eyes, of some old servant who had died. Christianity brought a new light, a new life, a new hope, a new happiness, to the working man, and all the circumstances of the Incarnation, all that they

saw of the Incarnate, and all they heard from His lips, were irresistible appeals to their sympathy.

When God sent His angels to proclaim to a fallen world, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord," when

"The praises of redeeming love they sang,
And heaven's whole orb with Alleluias rang,"

who heard the first notes of that glorious song? It was not sung in kings' palaces, nor in schools of philosophy, but to rough shepherds keeping watch by night, at work, on duty. And when

"To Bethlehem straight the enlightened shepherds ran,
To see the wonders God had wrought for man,
They found with Joseph and the Blessed Maid
Her Son, the Saviour, in a manger laid."

Who shall complain of his mean raiment or his humble home when he thinks of the Divine Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes that winter's night in the stable, for "there was no room for them in the inn"?

And when He grew to man's estate, and those very hands which were made hard with work touched the blind eyes and they saw, the deaf and the dumb and they heard and spoke—nay, the dead and they rose to life again—well might men cry in their surprise of astonishment, "Is not this the carpenter?"

Whom did He select to establish His kingdom and

to convert the world? I suppose that, of all those first great Apostolic missionaries, St. Paul was the only one who had received the highest form of education; and he, as he tells us, worked with his own hands, and when he came from preaching in the synagogue wrought with Aquila and Priscilla in tent-making, having learned the same occupation. Our Lord regarded not the clever disputers of this world, the famous orators and preachers, the learned expounders of the law, the erudite scribes, the pretentious Pharisees, but He chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak to confound the mighty. Well might that world wonder when Peter the fisherman spake to the poor cripple, "Silver and gold have I none . . . in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise and walk," and he, leaping up, stood and walked. Well might the rulers and elders, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, gather together in their perplexity, when many which heard the Word believed, and the number was about five thousand. "And when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled, and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

So you see, my brothers, how Christianity exalts, ennobles, consecrates, work. God has condescended to reveal Himself, through His Son, as a working God. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "With all reverence be it spoken," writes Bishop

Christopher Wordsworth, "the Architect, Painter, and Sculptor of the universe is Almighty God." Hence the name *δημιουργος*, "Worker for the people," was given to Him by the Platonic school of philosophy and by the Christian Fathers. Some speak of creation as though the Creator had made and left it, a perfect piece of self-acting machinery, which would regulate itself, and go on for ever; but God worketh, governs and maintains, and "as surely as the light fails when the sun sets," writes St. Augustine, "so would all nature collapse if God withdrew His providential care."

"And I work." None ever worked as Christ worked. As a child, in the perfect obedience of love; as a boy, in learning wisdom, both hearing and asking questions from the wise, God's appointed teachers; as a man, bodily in hard daily labour, and spiritually in preparation for His ministry; and when the time came that He must show Himself to the world, how patiently He persevered in the work which His Father had given Him to do, until by His Agony and Bloody Sweat, by His Cross and Passion, it was finished on earth, and begun in the souls which He nourishes with His grace, and in which, by the Holy Communion of His Body and His Blood, He fulfils His most loving promise, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you;" begun in heaven, where He ever liveth to make intercession for us, and is preparing for them that love Him such good things as pass man's understanding.

Christianity not only abolished slavery, but taught the dignity and happiness of work. It was still

“The primal curse,
But softened into mercy, made the pledge
Of cheerful days and nights without a groan.”

It largely restored that enjoyment of labour which man knew when he was first placed by his Maker in a garden to dress and to keep it, and which he would have always welcomed, without pain or weariness, if he had not abused his freedom. There would have been no sweating and grinding, no ache of brow or limb, no poisonous fumes, no blackening smoke, had there been no sin. Wherever it produces suffering or disease, it is because of a selfishness which is sin; but wherever it is honest work well done, it brings happiness. It may at first be irksome, but from a brave patience it becomes a habit, and then contentment and joy. It matters not what or where our work may be, work of the hand or the head; whether we be masters or servants, rich or poor, clever or dull; whether we command an ironclad or stoke its fires; whether our work be in the study or the counting-house, in the factory or the field, high up on the builder's scaffold or low down in the mine;—the question which you and I shall have to answer at last will be, not, Where were you placed? but, Did you make the most of your position?—not, What kind of work did you do? but, Did you do your best?

And so to every man, whether he does it or not,

God gives him a work to do. Whether he does it or no is not your affair, except that you are bound, as a Christian, to help him if you can, to "bear one another's burdens;" and the best help you can give him is by example. Beyond this, what he does or leaves undone is no concern of yours. "Who art thou that judgest another? to his own Master he shall stand or fall;" "Every man must give account of himself unto God;" "Every man shall receive the reward of his own labour;" "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" "Let every man prove his own work, for every man shall bear his own burden."

"To every man his work;" and therefore all evasions and excuses, all idleness, are a shameful degradation of our manhood and a mean abuse of our liberty; they are rebellious and offensive to God, and they are an injustice and a deprivation to mankind, whereas every honest work well done is acceptable and well pleasing, beautiful in His all-seeing sight, and helpful to His creatures. God gives it (if it is not for the use, comfort, and happiness of your fellow-men it is none of His), and therefore, whatever it be, it is honourable in His esteem. Whether it be simple or scientific, for the hands or the head, in the dockyard or the barracks, on land or sea, whether you are working for yourself or for others, you are in God's employment, and you are responsible to Him, not for the kind of task which was given—that is fixed—but for the manner in which you have accepted and achieved it.

We are too apt, looking only at results, to forget and to underrate the labour which has produced them. We admire the great ships steaming out to sea, the express engine gliding over the rails at fifty miles an hour; but we have never a thought of the strong men toiling in dark mines for the iron and the coal, without which these had never been. As we gaze upon our grand cathedrals and churches, with their exquisite carving in wood and stone, we shall do well to remember not only the builder and the graver, Bezaleel and Aholiab, but those who, like Solomon's and Hiram's workmen three thousand years ago, prepared the stone and the timber, and bore the burden and heat of the day.

We rejoice in the records of our victory, and repeat to our children the names of our heroes; but these warriors, generals, and admirals would be the first to tell you that their battles were won by the brave obedience of the soldiers and sailors whom they led. The field-marshal and the bugler, the architect and the mason, the engineer and the navy, must all work together. As St. Paul told the Corinthians, "The body is not one member, but many. . . . The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; neither the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble are necessary."

A ship may be saved or lost in a storm through the strong work or the scamp-work of a carpenter, as through the good seamanship or the ignorance of

a captain. It is written that "if there is a readiness of will, there will be a performance also of that which we have; for if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

And so he is a nobleman in God's peerage, who goes out every morning, it may be, from the humblest of homes to his work and to his labour until the evening, with a determination, as working for a heavenly Master, to do his best; and no titles which this world can bestow, no money which was ever coined, can bring a man who does no work within the sunshine of God's love. Solomon knew, and Solomon said, "The sleep of the labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." Weariness will snore upon the flint, while sloth finds the down pillow hard.

So that we must never be so unjust and foolish as to despise any work, however subordinate, or to think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, because we are placed in more prominent positions, and seem to have more important duties to perform; because we may have servants instead of serving, better homes, clothing, or food; but should rather pass the time of our sojourning here in fear of our greater responsibilities, and of the words of our Lord Jesus which He spake: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven!" "Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime

hadst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented."

The only man who has no claim upon your respect, but much claim upon your pity, is the man who does no work, or as little and as badly as he can. Sometimes you hear it said, "Such a one is well-to-do; he has a good income; he has no need to work." He has all the more need, because he has larger opportunities for working to the glory of Him who has given him the means, and to the good of his fellow-men.

Do you believe in the man with his hands in his pockets and his pipe always in his mouth? Would you choose him for your friend? Would you go to him for advice? Can you envy him? Can you think for one moment that he who does no work—a fruitless tree, a well without water—is happier than the man who has been using the power which God gave him for his own good and that of his neighbour?

It is in all ranks of society, in every period of life, a great deception to think that others are happier than we are, and so to covet and desire other men's goods. David himself was grieved to see the ungodly in such prosperity; they seemed to come to no misfortune like other folk; but he went to the place where he had met them in their pride and finery, and they were gone—perished. No more jealousy, no more complaint. "I would rather be a door-keeper," he said, "in the house of my God, than dwell

in the tents of ungodliness," even as another of God's heroes, Moses, "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

There are other motives, and good motives too, which induce men to work, and to work well. It is a righteous ambition to desire success and to use our energies to obtain it—"to gain by trading." It is honest and just to say, "I receive payment, on the understanding that I will be industrious and earn the wages I receive, and I mean to be true to my engagement." And that is a true and tender affection which works to sustain those who are nearest and dearest to the worker's heart, and needs not the warning of the Apostle, "He that provideth not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." There are few sadder sights than the home of the sluggard, the drunkard, the gambler, where there is want instead of plenty, dirt instead of cleanliness, and misery where there might be peace.

I repeat that men may be industrious, honest, and affectionate from the motives which I have named; but, by themselves, these are weak against temptation, and, at the best, they promote only our temporal welfare. The work which God has given every man to do includes not only to work for the body, but for the soul; not only for earth, but heaven. "Work out your salvation;" and there is only one

principle, one conviction, which can constrain us persistently to do our best—the belief that we are the servants of One who is no respecter of persons, and who, whether we fulfil or neglect our duties, whether we watch and pray, or whether we say, “My Lord delayeth His coming,” and begin to smite our fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, will come when we look not for Him, and will reward every man according to his works.

This acknowledgment will act upon our lives and conversation through the two most powerful agents which influence our thoughts and words and actions—*fear* and *love*. We know what fear is with regard to those placed over us on earth, of disobedient children towards their parents, of idle scholars towards their teachers, of criminals on trial towards those who try them, of the deceitful and unfaithful towards their friends, of dishonest men towards their employers—the fear of being found out and punished. How much more, then, should we be afraid of offending our heavenly Father, our divine Teacher, the Holy Spirit sent to teach us all things, the only Saviour, the righteous Judge, the Master who has given to every man his work, the Lord of the vineyard who when the even is come will say unto His steward, “Call the labourers and give them their hire.”

We may evade condemnation and chastisement by false excuses to our earthly masters, but “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and

the good." The voice which Adam heard when he thought to hide himself among the trees of the garden speaks to every guilty ear, "Where art thou?"—to every one who is faint-hearted and afraid, and shrinks from the work which God has given him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"—and to all who forget Him and go on still in their wickedness, "These things hast thou done, and thou thoughtest wickedly that I am even such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things that thou hast done."

The time comes to every man, but to some it comes too late, when

"The ghosts of forgotten actions
Are floating before his sight,
And things which he thought were dead things
Are alive with a terrible might;
And the vision of all his past life
Is an awful thing to face,
Alone with his conscience, sitting
In some solemn, silent place."

Wherefore it is written, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

But we have a revelation from Himself that God is love, and though He is greatly to be feared even in the council of His saints, and to be had in reverence of all those that are round about Him, yet the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, until perfect love casteth out fear. And I would ask again, if our love of earthly parents is so intense and indelible, what bound can there be

to our devoted affection for Him who made them and us ?

“ No earthly father loves like Thee ;
No mother, e'er so mild,
Bears and forbears as Thou hast done
With me, Thy sinful child.”

Very marvellous are the records, very marvellous is our own experience, of the power of human love. Jacob's long service, beneath the burning heat of the summer day and in the piercing cold of the winter night, for Rachel. Ruth's anxious prayer, “ Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.” David's lamentation, “ I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.” Or again, “ And the king was much moved, and went up to his chamber over the gate; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!”

And you yourselves also know the intense affection, faithful unto death, of parents and children, husbands and wives, friends for friends; but “ God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life;" and Christ so loved the world that He took upon Him the form of a servant, and though He was despised and rejected of men, He humbled Himself even to the death upon the Cross. Men have died in fire and water to save others, men have died in battle for their country; but Christ, and *Christ only; died for His enemies.*

"For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind."

If, then, we fear the censure of our rulers and employers and teachers on earth, the loss of influence or money from not doing our work, or doing it badly; and if, on the other hand, we take pleasure in it and do it with our might because we love him for whom we do it, or love the work itself; how much more should we stand in awe of that terrible voice of most just judgment, "Depart . . . I never knew you;" "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant"! What, if a promise being left to us of coming into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it! What, if we should see the glories and hear the music of heaven, and then the golden gates should be shut, and we in outer darkness!

On the other side, if obedience is so easy when we not only love those who command, but know that they will reward us generously; if we follow so readily and bravely those whom we trust; how much more humbly,

yet heartily, should we do our duty in that state of life to which He is pleased to call us, who is our Master, our Saviour, and Judge!

Again, if children go to their parents, pupils to their teachers, they who serve to those who rule in a household, they who work in the fields to the farmer, apprentices to a foreman, clerks to a chief, soldiers and sailors to their officers, to ask and to receive instruction, how much more should we go to our Master in heaven and pray to Him for guidance in all the work, temporal and spiritual, which He has given us to do, having His promise which cannot fail, that He will give His Holy Spirit, if we ask in faith, nothing doubting (in His own time and way, not in ours, for we know not what to pray for as we ought), to guide us into all truth and to strengthen us in all good works? "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" If in all our vocations, trades, and professions we require written rules and directions, grammars, dictionaries, text-books, red-books, which will inform and not mislead us, shall we not often and anxiously search the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus?

And to us especially, to whom, all unworthy as we are, is committed the sacred work of the ministry, these commands are given to pray and study God's Word. How can we expect men to comply when we

repeat St. Paul's injunction, "Let a man so account of us as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of Christ," unless, as of old, they take knowledge that we have been with Jesus, and have our instructions as well as our authority from Him? How shall we entreat you to pray, in secret, with your families, and in the house of prayer, if we are not fervent in our own supplications? How summon you to worship unless we give you frequent opportunities to meet and join with us in the place of worship, unless the houses of God are open continually and free to all? How shall we invite others to the gospel feast, to Holy Communion, to the Supper of the Lord, unless we ourselves come often holy and clean to such a heavenly feast, believing in our hearts that our sinful bodies are made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through his precious Blood? How shall we bid you to "obey them that are over you in the Lord, and esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake," unless we are ourselves obedient, unless our work is well done, unless we watch for souls as they that must give account.

And in this case, as in all others, God teaches us not only by His Spirit in our hearts, His Word in our ears, not only by command and direction, by the sweet persuasions and promises of His mercy, by the fearful warnings of His justice, but by example also. There is no record of great men whom we admire in history, there is no remembrance of anything in our own lives

which we retain with gladness, which does not assure us that no addition was ever made to the greatness of a nation, to the honour and the happiness of a life, without hard work. No discoveries of science, no masterpieces of art, were accomplished without patient labour. And this applies to every individual soul.

Copying those who have done their best, you do in God's sight as well as they ; and to the lowliest and poorest who has so laboured it will be said at last, " Well done, good and faithful servant : thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Was it not for this, think you, that the most high God took upon Him the form of a servant ? Was it not to teach us this, that the words were spoken to all mankind, " In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread," and He, who increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man, was born in a stable, lived in a poor man's home, and toiled with the saw and the plane ?

My brothers, should not such thoughts as these encourage us to do our work, whatever it may be, more heartily, more hopefully, because God gives it to us, and because, if whatever our hand findeth to do we do it with our might, if we are fervent in spirit, as serving the Lord, He has promised us His blessing here and for ever ? Should not thoughts like these silence for ever those miserable excuses, that

men are so busy that they have no time for religion ; whereas their business, their work, the way they do it, is their religion ? To ignore the Divine Presence is to live without God in this world and the next ; to lean solely upon our own understanding, to do only that which is right in our own eyes, is the darkest of all ignorance, and can only end in failure ; but to work as in His sight, and for Him, is the truest worship which we can offer on earth, and the main preparation for His worship in heaven.

Work is life, and idleness is death, to body, mind, and soul. Work is like the river, broad and deep and brimming over, which keeps the meadows green ; idleness is the stagnant marsh which exhales the pestilence. Work makes the flowers and fruits, idleness the weeds and barren trees of the garden. Work brightens the metal with friction, and idleness corrodes with rust. The man at work, on duty, welcomes the approach of his master ; the idle man would hide if he could.

It will be so, when it is our time to die, whether death comes suddenly or slowly, in the peaceful home, in the silent room, or amid the horrors of war, or the terrible crash of the collision and the wreck. In that supreme crisis, the faithful servant shall hear the Master's voice, " When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid ; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet."

But in death as in life, the wicked—they who left undone the work which God gave them to do, and

followed their own imaginations—are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest. “There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”

And in that great day, when every one of us shall give account of himself unto God, and be judged according to his works, only to those who have done the work which He gave them to do, shall the Lord of Glory repeat the words which He spake in His humiliation on earth, “Look up, and lift up your hearts, for your redemption draweth nigh;” but to the slothful and impenitent those terrible words of righteous judgment, “Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.”

IV.

TRUE EDUCATION.

“Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?”
—JER. xii. 26.

KINGS and queens will have to answer this question when the great day of account shall come. “Where is the flock that was given thee?” The rulers of the nations, and they who made laws for nations, and they who chose them to be their lawgivers; men in authority, bishops and pastors, officers in command; men of large possessions, employers of labour; heads of colleges and masters of schools;—they must all answer it. Not only they who rule in palaces, and legislate in parliaments, and lead armies and fleets, and have great estates and pay away thousands in weekly wages; but every father and mother, however lowly their occupation, must reply to this inquiry.

Nay, the question will be addressed to us all. By our example, good or bad; by the neglect or discharge of our duty, by our apathy or sympathy, we help or hinder others. “No man liveth to himself.”

Where is thy flock? Shepherds, every one of us, if we be true disciples of Him who gave His life for

the sheep ; shepherds, bringing Him our best, like that first keeper of sheep, righteous Abel, and not our worst like him who first asked, " Am I my brother's keeper ? " and then did foul murder upon him ; shepherds, faithful, gentle, and brave, working patiently like Jacob amid Laban's flock, when in the day the drought consumed him, and by night the frost ; as Moses, who kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, and chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season ; brave as David when he slew the lion and the bear ; shepherds, watching on duty, hearing now and then the angels in the darkness, seeing now and then a gleam of glory, as it was on the pasture-land of Judæa that night when our Lord was born ; shepherds, all of us, to whom the Bishop of our souls has said, as to St. Peter, " Lovest thou Me ? . . . Feed My lambs."

If we evade the duty, we have lost the love ; we are mere hirelings, fleeing from our work whenever it is hard or dangerous ; or worse, robbers and wolves, stealing, scattering, tearing, slaying the flock—the lambs, it may be—though He has warned, " Whoso shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

And yet how many children in Christian England have never been brought to Christ, that He might take them in His arms to His fold, and sign them with His brand, and glorify them by His Name ! And

how many of those who have been baptized are never taught the privileges or the obligations of baptism ! How many are taught, not by grace, but by human example and precept, so soon as they are able to learn, not what a solemn promise and profession they have made at the font, but to set their affections upon the things of the earth ; to regard money as the most precious of all possessions ; to think more of outward adorning, “of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel,” than of “the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price,” and of the shame which is a glory and a grace. They are permitted to mistake impudence for wit, and licence for liberty.

There is a horrible story told on the western coasts how one of those vile murderers, who are called wreckers, went out on a dark, tempestuous night and held a bright lantern-flame on the top of a great rock by the sea, and how the helmsman of a ship in distress, mistaking it for the friendly lighthouse, steered accordingly toward the shore, and all perished ; and when the morning came, and the vessel lay a shattered wreck upon the beach, and this wretched slave of Satan went down to collect his spoil, the first thing he saw was a drowned man who seemed to look at him with sightless eyes, and it was his own and only son. And may it not be that, on the everlasting shore, the children of this generation will rise up in the judgment with their parents and will condemn them : “You placed false lights before us, instead

of that light which lighteth to salvation, and you made shipwreck of our souls" ?

We shudder to read of that horrible massacre of the Innocents, when brutish Herod, fearing lest he should lose his power, slew all the little ones that were in Bethlehem and on the coasts thereof, two years old and under.

"The air was full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead ;
The heart of Rachel for her children crying,
Would not be comforted."

But may it not be possible—it is a very awful thought—for Christians so called to take part in a yet more fearful destruction, the destruction of souls, by crucifying afresh the Christ within them ?

Now, what is generally meant by a good education ? Too often it means a school in which boys and girls will meet with those who are in a higher grade than their own. Too often when parents say, "We want to get our children into good society," they are thinking only of worldly things ; they forget that the only really good society is the society of good men. A good education ? No education which separates itself from religion can ever make men good ; learned, accomplished, agreeable, clever, but not good. If you only cultivate mind and manners, you are plating base metal, you are veneering worm-eaten wood, because you do not reach the source of good and evil, you do not touch the heart. More than this, there is abundant evidence, in the reports that come to us from the chaplains of our gaols and

from the criminal courts, that a mere brain education is "to put sharp weapons in a madman's hands," to make the forger and the dishonest clerk more formidable than the pickpocket or the burglar.

Is not lust more powerful to seduce, when it speaks with music in its voice, but evil in its heart, sentiments softer than oil, yet be they very swords? Is malice less malignant when it shoots its arrows, even bitter words sharpened by all the artifices of a cruel, sarcastic wit? The Duke of Wellington years ago forewarned those who would expel a definite religious teaching, that an education without Christianity would make a nation of clever devils. And there is no more painful sight to the Christian, when he walks abroad, than to notice many proofs around him of the neglect of true education; when he hears so much that is painful to hear, sees poverty where there might have been plenty, and discord where there should be peace; disease and suffering, sometimes in the young as the inherited penalties of sin, sometimes in the middle-aged who have given themselves over to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness, together with those natural infirmities, the dimness of sight, the dulness of hearing, the unsteady step, the loss of memory, which must happen when the years come, when we shall say, "So far as this world's joys can please, I have no pleasure in them."

He sees decay everywhere, death so near, and God preaching to all, "Set thine house in order, for

thou shalt die," and yet meets men and women calling themselves Christians, living in sin, living for self, prayerless, thankless, Christless, as though they had no souls to save. He hears the fierce words of the passionate, the foul words of the vicious, the bitter words of the scandalous, the false words of the deceitful, the maudlin nonsense of the sot; ay, and out in pleasant fields, where our merciful Father makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends His rain on the just and the unjust, he hears the labourer cursing and swearing at those poor beasts of burden which God has made to share and to lighten his toil; and at the very time when the valleys stand so thick with corn that they seem to laugh and sing, profaning the Name of the Creator! What is the cause of it all? The want of a true education in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

And it is not only that which the Christian sees and hears which distresses him, but that which he knows must surely follow, which stirs his soul with pity.

We talk commonly and carelessly about a spoilt child, not realizing the full meaning of our words. It is not only that the boy or the girl is spoilt, and that which should have been a happiness becomes a nuisance, but God's masterpiece is debased and His gracious purpose marred, a soul for which Christ has died is robbed of its heritage. We know too surely the results of this terrible neglect, for we see them again and again. These children will grow up into

bad men and women, bad neighbours, subjects, servants, citizens; false friends, dishonest, idle, malicious, reprobate; the drones of the hive, the canker in the fruit, the flaw in the metal, the poison and pest of society.

But it may perhaps be said that the time for complaint such as this is over; that a sure remedy has been found for the disease; that the nation, disgusted at last beyond endurance by the misery and the disgrace which untaught ignorance always brings upon itself and its surroundings, has resolved to educate; and that not only are schools provided for children throughout the land, but that the law compels attendance.

And this is especially a subject for great thankfulness—I mean the privilege of that which is called elementary or secular education for those who otherwise would not or could not have it. Untaught children, for example, are as a rule but clumsy workers, and the body is rarely quick in its energies where the mind, the motive power, is dull. And the power of reading and writing, and of thinking about that which is read and written, will remove that stupid, stolid ignorance which disgraces a civilized land, and will raise those who now work like mere machines, and eat and drink and sleep like mere animals, to the capabilities of a higher intelligence. Men will have a greater power to succeed in business and the various avocations of life. Without such an education, however skilful and industrious a man may be, and trust-

worthy and persevering, when he reaches a certain point he must stop. How often do we hear it said, "If my parents had only sent me to school, I should not have been what I am, nor where I am, now"! If that man had only been taught to read and write, he would have been a master now instead of a servant, paying instead of receiving wages. Who has not heard an employer say, "There is one whom it would be for my own advantage, even more than for his, to place in a most important and profitable position, but he knows nothing of accounts and book-keeping, and he is therefore incapable"? And the successes of self-made men, as they are called, show how much the school has done, however simple has been the instruction, for those who, though they had great natural ability, without it might have been worsted and failed.

Yes, we are all agreed that education pays, and that the father is wise in his generation who says, "Of silver and gold I have but little, but one precious gift I can and will bestow upon my children, and that is a good education. So far as I can, I will place the power of being wealthy or wise within their reach. They shall have the implements, whether they will use them or not. It is a hard fight, the struggle for success in life, and no child of mine shall go into the battle without the weapons of warfare in his hands. No child of mine shall be compelled to mate with fools, to be silent, or speak only to expose his ignorance in the presence of others, because he has

not scholarship enough to acquire information or to express his thoughts." And because there are so many who have not this wise affection, who from ignorance or selfishness make no effort that their children may be taught, it is surely prudent, it is surely kind, that the Parliament should say to them, "If you refuse to do your duty, that which is of such importance for those who are nearest and should be dearest to you, the law shall enforce that which reason and affection should have accepted cheerfully.

But does the education of the mind, of the reason, satisfy when we have obtained it? Will a mere secular education make men and women really better, homes happier, life brighter, braver, purer than before? Or will selfishness devote this new power in cleverer, subtler, operations unto self? Can any mere mental instructions make men gentle and generous, just and truthful, upright and honourable, above receiving a bribe or doing a mean action when there is no risk of discovery? Will it make them contented with their place and condition, satisfied with their lot in this world, confident that they are fulfilling all the purposes for which they were sent into it, and exercising all the powers which they possess? As they grow older, and the long shadows and the chill eventide announce the coming of the night, will this mere secular education have taught anything which can sustain and cheer? Will it make them resigned to die, ready to part with those things for which they have worked so hard?

Reason and revelation answer, No. Reason—the experience of facts—tells us that a mere secular education has no influence in restraining vice. “Little hearts and large brains” are too often produced by it. Crime does not diminish as reading and writing increase, but, on the contrary, new materials have been supplied for fraud.

What has been the result of that elementary education on which we spend some seven or eight millions annually? Has it been followed by an increase or decrease of crime? Take the reports from two of our largest cities recently made* by those most competent to make them. The Chief Constable of Manchester states that “never in Manchester was there a time when crimes were so frequently committed by persons of good education as now. While ordinary thieves stole last year in Manchester property to the value of £6398, the amount of which firms and persons in trade were defrauded by people of good education, by means of forgeries and like devices, was upwards of £90,000. Hardly a day passes that letters are not received complaining of ‘long firm’ frauds, rampant in all parts of the country, and all of which require the ingenuity and dexterity which are alone given by good education.”

With regard to the more serious offences against property, such as burglary and housebreaking, the report from Liverpool states the numbers to be—“in 1859, seventy-nine; in 1869, one hundred and

* This address was given in 1892.

forty-four; in 1879, one hundred and thirty-six; in 1889, one hundred and ninety-seven; in 1890, two hundred and thirty-two,—an increase out of all proportion with the growth of the population of Liverpool.”

I do not make these quotations, my brothers, to depreciate the inestimable advantages of elementary education, but to point out the abuse of it, and the impotence of mere mental instruction to purify the heart, and to ennoble the man by overcoming evil with good.

Revelation, Christianity, tell us *why*—because mere human learning is of the earth, earthy, and by itself it cannot rise heavenward; because it is a remedy which does not reach the seat of the disease; because it does not speak to the immortal soul; because the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; because it is first an education of disappointment, and then an education of despair; it is a system which by itself can never make us temperate in abundance, hopeful in sorrow, the masters and not the slaves of our passions—can never make us free, independent men. And when we need help and hope the most, it is a system which brings us neither; it comes to us after a few short years, and says, “I can do no more for you, and what I have done dies with you.” Your powers of learning, gaining, pleasing, are exhausted, and soon life itself will fade.

My brothers, we want something happier and truer than this, when we are looking on the white

faces of our dead, or are ourselves face to face with death. We want something that no mere secular education, no intellectual scientific knowledge, can give; we want the sweet voice which whispers in the ear, "Not dead, but sleepeth; not lost, but gone before." And so it is revelation which by God's mercy shows us the more excellent way; suggests the motive and bestows the power for a nobler, truer life than this; tells a man that he has a soul to save, and inspires him with the desire of salvation. We want an education for heaven.

Listen! "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." You can never be honest on a sure principle, you can never love honesty, you can never adhere to it because it is, as the world says, the best policy, because it prospers most in the long run—as a rule you can never be really honest until you hear God speaking to you, "Thou shalt not steal;" "Provide things honest in the sight of men;" "A false way is an abomination to the Lord;" "Nor thieves, nor covetous men, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." The police may watch and the law may punish, the inspectors of weights and measures may examine, compare, condemn, or stamp; but if there is no voice in the conscience of the seller which says, "*Thou seest me*," "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good," there is no sure security against deceit and fraud. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning," the alphabet, "of wisdom," and withal love of the Lord carries on the education;

and as the fear of hell makes us just, the hope of heaven will make us generous. If from fear we cease to do evil, from love we learn to do well, until our terror of the Judge is lost in the adoration of the Saviour, and perfect love casteth out fear.

We want an education, we want a motive, and we want a power which shall make husbands and wives faithful, and young men and women chaste, and these we shall never find in the mere conviction that lust is in itself ugly and repulsive, that it is sure to encounter great oppositions which may injure our position in society and interfere with our worldly success; but which we shall find when a voice from heaven speaks to us, "Marriage is honourable to all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." And men again will love and plead for purity when He pleads with them, "Know ye not, ye Christians, that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall you then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid."

Again, we want an education which will teach us to be temperate in all things, not only because gluttony and drunkenness are so offensive to others, and so degrading and injurious to self; not only because we have pledged and bound ourselves by human rules to abstain, but because God bids us use this world and not abuse it, appealing to our fear when He warns us that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom, and encouraging our love when

He tells us that he who striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things, and shall have an incorruptible crown. We require, in short, as immortal souls, for ourselves and for our children an education which sets before us heavenly ambitions and inspires us with eternal hopes, which will open our eyes and purify our sight to look far beyond self to the city whose Maker is God ; beyond the sea of life, now so smooth and glittering in the sunshine that we forget we have a voyage to make, and now so terrible with its mountain waves that it seems as though we should never make it. We want a faith which will surely bring us to the haven where we would be ; which works on in cloudless calm, and which no tempest can dismay. We want something far higher, more enduring, than that mere worldly education which teaches us little more than this : " When thou doest good unto thyself, men will speak well of thee." We want an influence, a power in our hearts, raising us upward, urging us onward " to do Thy will, O God."

Think of this, you working men—those especially who are fathers. You have a great power in this matter, through those whom you send to Parliament ; and I ask you, not only as Christians, but as citizens and patriots, What sort of men, what kind of principles, are to govern England ? Will you have us believe that righteousness alone exalteth a nation, or shall we run the risk of repeating in London that which was seen in Paris, when they set a harlot on the high altar of the cathedral to represent the reign of Reason,

shot down an archbishop in the street, and threw vitriol in the faces of those who were less brutish, or rather devilish, than themselves?

But your parental is far greater than your political power—to see your children virtuously brought up, not only in school, but at home. Yes, you yourself, however poor a scholar, can give them the best of all teaching, a good example—the beautiful, persuasive example of an upright and industrious life.

What a responsibility, and what a power every one of us has to bring some little child to Jesus!

Michael Angelo, walking in the streets of Rome with a friend, suddenly stopped to examine a heap of marble blocks. Then he went on his knees and began to clean one piece. His friend said, “What are you doing?” and the great sculptor answered, “There’s an angel in that marble!” He saw the beauty of the stone, he had it conveyed to his studio, and after many a hard day’s work out came the angel. Well, in every child you meet, however poor and mean, there is an angel. If it is a baptized child, it has an angel of its own always guarding it and pleading for it before the Father’s throne. But you may help to make the angel from the child, as Michael Angelo did from the block. Think about it. Think that it is in your power to help that little child to be a redeemed saint of glory; it may be when you die to welcome you at the gates of Paradise; to say, “When I seemed to have no hope and no friends, you came and taught me the excellent

way which has brought me into this glorious home!" Love the children; reverence the children. It is told of a great schoolmaster, John Trebonius, who taught Martin Luther, that he never appeared before his lads without uncovering his head. He said, "I do not know what great man I may be teaching." But we do know, when we teach children to love God and to love purity and innocence, that we are teaching members of Christ, heirs of heaven, inheritors of eternal glory, and it is the only teaching that can keep children pure, because it will make them feel and know that they are temples of the Holy Ghost, and that they dare not defile that temple.

And now, my brothers, take to your heart and to your home to-day this gracious promise of your Saviour, "Whoso shall receive one such little child in My Name, receiveth Me." Claim it and win it, by bringing up those whom He loved the best in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, so that when the Judge shall ask, "Where is thy flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?" you may look up and answer, "Behold, I and the children whom God hath given me."

V.

CONVERSION.

“When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.”—ST. LUKE xxii. 32.

LET me speak to you, my brothers, on a subject which, in these days, has been by many sadly misunderstood—I mean Conversion. Let us hear what the Holy Scripture doth say concerning it.

There is no such thing as a complete conversion to Christianity without Baptism before or after. Before the coming of the Holy Ghost we read, “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judæa, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . Then went after him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. . . . Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to be baptized of him.” John baptized with water.

You will remember the words to Nicodemus: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” And again He said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

After the Day of Pentecost St. Peter preached,

“Repent, and be baptized”—with the Baptism of water and the Holy Spirit, as he afterwards wrote, “Baptism saves us.”

The same proofs of sincerity were to follow this initiation, this entrance into the Church of Christ. St. John preached, “Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.” Fear came upon St. Peter’s converts, and they steadfastly continued in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Our Lord said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works;” “If ye love Me, keep My commandments.”

Sorrow for sin, a new heart and a new life—such has been God’s blessed scheme of salvation ever since the Fall. There is no other remedy nor cure but this—the sorrow which hates sin because God hates it, finding an escape from it by the way which He has opened unto us through the Incarnation, the Sacrifice, and Presence of His Son, and so attaining pardon, restoration, sanctification, peace, hope, rest in paradise, glory in heaven.

The text of the preaching of the Old Testament and of the New may be given in one word—“Repent.” “God commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” Throughout the whole of the older dispensation, in the law and the prophets, we hear the voice of a loving Father calling upon His children to repent; and as we open the New Testament we come upon a most solemn and striking scene, when, in the country about Jordan, in the Holy Eastern Land,

a great crowd met together, a mixed multitude—Romans and Jews, rulers and subjects, state officials and rough fishermen, great scholars and ignorant unlearned men, rich and poor, old and young—listening with a strained, painful, yearning interest, to hear the poor hermit, a stranger from the wilderness, wearing raiment of camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins, John the Baptist, preach repentance. There were representatives of the two greatest nations upon earth—of God's chosen people, and of that mighty empire which ruled the civilized world. There were men of education, of authority, and wealth. But they stood around the preacher, downcast, in a great humility ; their cleverness, power, money, forgotten, or remembered but to be despised ; silent, sorrow-stricken, consenting to all he said, though his words were severe and stern, though he denounced and threatened them. They listened while one of the noblest of heaven's heroes, a man trained by years of discipline, prayer, and meditation to do a great work for God, stood there, dauntless and defiant in the sacred cause of truth, ready to die, doomed to die, for truth—stood there and preached repentance as the only salvation from the wrath to come through Jesus. And when he ceased, there came forth from the heart of that multitude, as from the heart of one man, no words of doubt, no excuses for delay, but only this question, as of life and death, "What shall we do?" And the answer was, "Repent, and be Baptized."

Ever since the first Whitsun-day this holy Baptism has been regarded by the Church as necessary to salvation, and her children have been taught to say, in answer to the question, "What is required of persons to be baptized?" "Repentance, whereby we forsake sin." Human nature responds to the appeal; the instinct of the unregenerate, the Gentiles who have not the law, have recognized with shame and sorrow the wickedness of sin. Plato said, "Though I knew that my sin would not be discovered, or was sure that it would be pardoned, I would not do it; there is something so repugnant in the ugliness of sin." How much more painfully the baptized must feel that sin degrades, darkens, weakens! They cannot fail to know that wanton lust, adultery, and fornication, with cruelty, lying, cheating, gluttony, and drunkenness, are contemptible, foul, and base, things to be ashamed of as unworthy of their manhood, and deadly to their spiritual life. Loud above all other voices the warning comes to us from time to time, "Except ye repent, ye shall perish." "Come unto Me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: I will in no wise cast you out." God pleads with every soul of man. He sends Moses to Pharaoh, Samuel to Saul, Nathan to David, Elijah to Ahab, Jonah to Nineveh, the Baptist to Herod, St. Peter and St. Paul to the Gentiles; and yet, alas! it is now as in the Lord's time with us.

He could do all things except bring men to repentance. All nature obeyed His voice; the winds

ceased, the great billows fell, the evil spirits fled at His command ; but the heart of man was hard, impenitent ; and this was His exceeding bitter cry, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life." "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !"

But now, in these days, there is much peril lest we should either forget this great doctrine of a repentance, or should substitute something else in its place. If the tempter cannot induce us to forsake religion altogether, he will endeavour to deceive us by substituting the false for the true. There is not a jewel in the crown of Jesus which he does not imitate with tinsel and paint. There is not a coin from the royal mint but he will forge it with metal that is base. And so now, by substituting conversion for repentance, many souls are beguiled from the truth. There is no real difference in the meaning of the words "conversion" and "repentance," though the former is found but once in the Bible, and the latter in every part of it. But this substitution has been accompanied by false doctrine, and the term has been employed and abused to the injury and perversion of the truth. It has been used to indicate a sudden and complete transformation of a sinner into a saint, accompanied by a sense of the assurance of salvation, free and final, and with no peril of relapse.

Now, we can imagine those who have never been baptized, or who have been taught to disbelieve in Baptism, who have been told from childhood there was no other way in which they could be saved, except by this sudden, sensible conversion, who have regarded themselves as out of the possibility of salvation until they *felt* they were saved, and that then there was no further fear; we can understand their anxiety and readiness to be persuaded, amid the clamorous supplications, the hysterical sobs, the enthusiasm and excitement of their friends, that the moment of their conversion has come. But we fail to comprehend how persons who belong to the Church, or persons who read the Scriptures for themselves, can be so deceived and misled. And yet there are men and women, taught the faith once delivered to the saints, surrounded by the means of grace, who forsake their first love and forget the guide of their youth, and will listen to these plausible inventions. They have wandered far away from innocence and God, and are beginning to feel themselves exiles and outcasts; but they have longings for home. But what a distance it seems over which they must retrace their steps! So this idea of a sudden transformation, without much effort on their part, attracts and pleases them. And I need not tell you how easy the operation is of accommodating our creed to our wish.

And though the argument has been a thousand times rent into fragments and scattered to the winds, this still remains a favourite plea: Was not Saul of

Tarsus raging like a wild beast against Jesus and the truth? Was he not suddenly, miraculously converted? Was not he assured of his salvation? It would weary one to answer, were it not that some would take silence as assent. Paul was not suddenly converted, and he was not assured of his salvation until he had fought the good fight and kept the faith. He saw a vision and heard a voice, but these only suggested his conversion. He might have disobeyed both. He was three days without sight or food. He might have given himself up to despair; instead, he was obedient to the heavenly vision, and began to pray for mercy. Then he was baptized—made a Christian. What then? He devoted himself to the hardest, most repulsive work which humanity can undertake—a confession of his own foolishness, an acknowledgment that his life had been a mistake. “Look at me, Saul of Tarsus, the clever, highly educated, energetic, successful Pharisee. There is not a ploughman in your fields, a beggar in your streets, so ignorant or so poor as I.” And he had to make this confession to men who doubted and derided, and called him craven and apostate. He had to proclaim himself a blasphemer, a persecutor and informer. He, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, to crave pardon from those whom he had despised and denounced! And for what reward and acknowledgment? Beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrecked, in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of his own countrymen, in perils of the heathen,

in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils amongst false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness!

Ah! when men have shown something of this heroic faith, let them talk of Saul's conversion as the model of their own. Whereas, what do we too often see from those who suddenly proclaim themselves converted men? First of all, instead of Paul's humility—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief;" instead of his fear lest he "should be a castaway;" instead of his constant strivings to mount higher, when, "forgetting those things which are behind, I press toward the mark for the prize of my high calling of God in Christ Jesus;"—instead of this, we too often find these new converts perfectly satisfied as to their spiritual state, but very doubtful, inquisitive, and censorious as to the souls of others, harassing and perplexing them with abrupt inquiries, "Are you saved? Do you know that you are saved?" And they are dissatisfied with any answer which is not in accordance with the dogmas and phrases of their clique, making the heart of the righteous sad whom God hath not made sad, and strengthening the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked ways by promising him life. These men pass, or think they pass, suddenly from one extreme to

another, and then, because others will not say as they say, and do as they do, and because they themselves cannot feel, whatever they may profess, *quite* satisfied, they are angry and invective. They would teach others when they should be learners.

What, for example, can a man who has led a profligate life and suddenly desires to leave it, because he is satiated or disgusted, or because he begins to be afraid of death and judgment and God's anger,—what can he know of the mind that was in Christ? Do not mistake me, my brothers, to mean that there are no special seasons of grace, deliverances from danger, consolations to grief, writings on the wall, graven on our memories in bright letters, which sparkle like gems and remind us of clearer manifestation, nearer approaches, true conversions, so far as they went, to God. There are, I trust, many here to whom such manifestations of the Spirit are the happiest thoughts of their souls. I would only offer a warning, which few will say in these days is unnecessary, against mistaking these beginnings and renewals, these trepidations and hopes, these gentle inducements or stern commandments to repent, for a true and complete repentance, for the one offering which may alone be accepted—the offerings of our souls and bodies, sanctified by the Spirit, instructed by the Scriptures, and strengthened by Sacraments, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice to God.

Onward towards godliness, away from sin, freeing ourselves as we go from the weight which presses

down the soul, so that it rises upward,—that is repentance, that is conversion. What glorious words are written of the poor prodigal, “He arose and came”! One day he was a disgraced and ruined man, sitting there with his fine clothes, smeared and spoiled, among the swine, and the next day he had begun his repentance, and the angels of God were rejoicing over him as he went on his journey home.

Assuredly we need conversion, all of us and always; for what does conversion mean? It means, in the language in which the blessed Gospels were written, simply a turning to God. The best men pray for it most, because they know the best how hard it is to set God always before them; to be always pressing onward and upward, heavenward; to follow the Divine Master in gentleness and humility, Who went about doing good. Step by step, here a little and there a little, day by day, we are to be converted towards God, upon the road of duty. And as our duty to Him consists in small but constant proofs of our love, so our duty towards our neighbour is performed through little acts of kindness and consideration which are in the power of all. Of course this conversion is hard, because it means turning away from many things that have beguiled and pleased us, and because there is no such thing as Christianity without a cross. But our gracious God will not leave us without witness of His approbation and His help. “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.”

It is related of one of the most famous of men, Alexander, who was justly designated the Great, that in his anxiety to know that his armies were cared for and doing their duty, he would from time to time put on the dress of a private soldier and would inspect his corps. One day, after a great victory, as he was returning from such a visit, he came upon a soldier leading a mule, heavily laden with spoil, up the hill, on which was the royal tent. The day was hot, and the load was so heavy that the humane soldier from time to time relieved the animal by taking portions upon himself, until at last he was almost overcome, and staggered under the weight. It seemed doubtful whether he could make further progress, when the king touched him with his hand and said, "Courage, my friend; you are but a few paces from the end of your journey. Persevere, and half that spoil shall be yours." So the great and gracious God in heaven looks down upon those who take up their cross and are mounting heavenward, as they follow His blessed Son. They hear His promise that these light afflictions, which endure but for a time, shall work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The sweet voice of the Master speaks to them adown the steep—

"Art thou weary, art thou languid,
Art thou sore distressed?
'Come to Me,' it saith, 'and coming,
Be at rest!'"

Go forward, my brother—"faint yet pursuing."

“Onward, Christian soldiers;” for it is God that giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

There are the same encouragements for those who work for heaven as for those who work for earth. Just as the statesman, whose heart is in his work studying history, poring over dry statistics, thinking anxiously—just as he is cheered and strengthened, not only by the thought that he is trying to do good to his fellow-men and to maintain the honour and prosperity of his country, but also by the commendations of his patriotism and his prospect of distinction; just as the painter, after many failures and many months of labour, at last achieves the effect which he desired, and the great picture, which thousands shall admire, comes out upon the canvas and develops day by day unto completeness; just as every man, if he deserves a name, goes forth to his work and to his labour until the evening, and, if that work has been well done, goes home to the keener relish of his simple food, and to the sweeter rest, as he feels himself a day nearer to his well-earned wage; so the Christian, who is really trying by God’s grace, given to his prayers, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, that, through the love of His Saviour he may have everlasting life, has from time to time some happy intimation that his service is acceptable, some encouragements of his Master’s approbation, not to be weary in well-doing, some assurance that in due time he shall reap.

Never yet did a man do anything for Jesus, never

yet did a penitent give up pleasure for duty, without a sure consciousness that his will was in harmony with God's. Whenever you say "No" to the body that you may say "Yes" to the soul; whenever for Christ's sake you go to the house of mourning instead of to the house of feasting, or stay at home when you might have gone to some merry-making, or that another might have the enjoyment, or that you might be with those who are in sickness or in sorrow, or because they wish it to whom you owe obedience; whenever you give the time which you might have wasted in idleness to God's service, or the money which you might have spent in selfishness to His poor; whenever you keep your lips from unkind words, or from words which are impure or untrue; whenever you set yourself on God's side and speak out boldly for truth, though the whole company be united against you, and think you bigoted, superstitious, dictatorial;—you shall know, when the victory for self has been won, that the Lord careth for the righteous, and shall feel the sunshine of His love.

You must be prepared for deceptive arguments. "Are not men and women spoken of in the New Testament as saved?" Yes, as all may be said to be saved by that one perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, which Christ made upon the Cross for the sins of the whole world, *but on conditions*; and all the baptized are spoken of as being in a state of salvation, but it is nowhere said that these conditions are suddenly fulfilled, or in any

measure fulfilled, until we have finished our course, and held the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. There is no exception to St. Peter's law, that we must pass the time of our sojourning here in fear.

The Israelites were saved from the Egyptians. They saw their enemies dead on the seashore. They were led towards the promised land, "in the daytime with a cloud, and all the night through with a light of fire." God taught them, warned, encouraged, and gave them bread from heaven to eat. But with many of them He was not well pleased, and they were overthrown in the wilderness; their bones lay scattered before the pit, like as when one breaketh and heweth wood upon the earth; and the history of their lusts and idolatry, their fornications and murmurings, are recorded, St. Paul tells us, for our ensample and admonition, lest we, once saved by baptismal water, as they by the Red Sea, we divinely guided and instructed, we to whom is offered the Bread of Life which came down from heaven, should fall into the same condemnation.

"There is no condemnation for us," it may be replied. "We are of those of whom Christ said, 'He that heareth My Word and believeth, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life;' and St. Paul repeats the words, 'There is no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus.'" But there were many in our Lord's day who believed for a time, but who left Him

and walked no more with Him. Hymenæus and Alexander made shipwreck concerning faith; Demas forsook Paul, having loved this present world. And so the Apostle warns the Romans that this freedom from condemnation is only for those "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

My brothers, there is only one real conversion—that love of Jesus, which, by patient continuance in well-doing, follows, faint but pursuing, in His steps; afar off, like St. Peter, but praying always—

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee;
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me."

VI.

UNBELIEF.

I. THE ORIGIN.

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.”—HEB. iii. 12.

THIS book, the Bible, is a history of unbelief, from the time that the woman lost her faith in God’s warning, “Thou shalt surely die,” until the Saviour said, “Because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not. . . . Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life.”

Ever since, there has been in mankind this evil heart of unbelief, sometimes openly acknowledged, but far more commonly disavowed by the lips, although evidently set forth in the life. Even those who continue steadfast in the faith have to contend earnestly with its subtle influence, and when their soul is assailed by its temptations, they cry with tears, like the father whose son was grievously tormented by an evil spirit, “Lord, I believe ; help Thou mine unbelief.”

Men of my age have witnessed a most remarkable transformation in the external aspect, signs, and evi-

dences of unbelief. Some fifty years ago there was, as always, the latent disease, but we saw no outward symptoms—the consuming heat showed neither smoke nor flame. Unbelief had neither speech nor language; it was not heard in conversation, nor read in literature; it was unknown professedly in our colleges and schools. The law forbade it, until the repeal of the Corporation and Test Act, in our legislatures and public officers. But now it is no longer a pestilence that walketh in darkness, but the sickness that destroyeth at noonday, and we may almost say of Christianity, as the Jews said of it to St. Paul at Rome, “As concerning this sect, we know that it is everywhere spoken against.” It is not only that the very abjects publicly blaspheme, and the drunkards make songs upon it; not only that religion is caricatured and parodied in our parks; but men of intellect and culture are reclothing in elegant diction the old arguments against the faith.

We remember a time when there seemed to be an armistice between Christ and anti-Christ. Now they have set the battle in array, army against army. Now unbelief, like Moloch, sceptred king, stands forth the stronger and the fiercer spirit, and cries aloud, “My sentence is for open war.” But thanks be to God, the aggressive force is faith. It is the revival of religion which has evoked the hostility of the infidel, and therefore, so far from accepting the inferences which some have drawn, and from repeating those plaintive disparagements which

suggest that we live in more evil days, I am led as a believer to directly opposite conclusions; because to any man who is convinced by the divine witness *within* him of revealed truth, and by the fulfilment of promise and prophecy in the history of the world *without*, that God will maintain His own cause, and will not suffer that truth to fail,—to him inquiry is so immeasurably superior to ignorance, interest to indifference, and energy to sloth. Only weeds and vermin and poisonous exhalations thrive in stagnant waters. There is hope in the tossings of fever; none in the painless silence which tells that mortification has set in. Archbishop Leighton says, “Dubious questioning is much better evidence than that senseless dulness which most take for believing; and though the faithful may seem to be minished, the Church may gain in intensity that which she loses in extent.”

And this is, of course, what Tennyson means when he says—

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds;”

namely, that a doubt which is so real that it must declare itself, and challenge a contest, is brave and true and hopeful, whereas the formal utterance of a creed may be only a vain oblation from those of whom it is written, “This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.”

There was only one class of men, when our blessed Lord was upon earth, who always excited His righteous wrath—the hypocrites, the Pharisees, who loved the

praises of men rather than the praises of God; who widened their phylacteries and advertised their alms, until they persuaded others and half persuaded themselves that they were righteous. Their case was hopeless. They said, "We see," therefore their sin remained. But when Thomas said, "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe," Jesus saith unto him, "Reach here thy finger and behold, and reach here thy hand and thrust it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing." And when all the Apostles came and said unto Him, "Increase our faith," though at first He rebuked them, as well He might, yet no long time after He showed to them, in the miraculous healing of the lepers, and by their conduct before and after they were healed, the conditions and the power of a saving faith.

But in whatever form this unbelief in Christianity is found, whether proclaiming itself in avowed hostility, or disclaiming itself in words, and disguising with outward observances a corrupt and unfaithful life, it proceeds as a rule from the same origin. It is the consequence, before it is the cause, of error, disobedience, and sin. John Keble—I was told by his friend—was asked by Justice Coleridge what he thought of modern scepticism, and his answer was, "that it always suggested to him a large amount of self-conceit, and that he was quite sure that in every unbeliever there was something morally wrong."

Unbelief is a confession of defeat, though it be made unconsciously; an apology for the submission of the spirit to the flesh, of baptismal grace to innate corruption, of good to evil. It may be in rare instances that which it so often professes to be, the yearning for truth, of a mind dissatisfied with revealed religion; but it exists mainly, because it is afraid of the truth, because it magnifies its severities and refuses its restraints, because it will not learn from Him who alone can teach, and who assures us that if we will only submit our pride to His humility, His yoke will be easy and His burden light, and that we shall find rest for our souls.

“Wicked and impure lives,” so writes to me a working man, who has a large knowledge of his brethren, “keep more people away from Christ and His Church than infidelity of mind;” and it has been well said, “Faith becomes suspected only when it begins to be troublesome, and to this day unbelief has never made a sensualist, but sensualism has made nearly all the unbelievers.” The yoke of faith is never rejected, but in order to shake off the yoke of duty; and religion would never have an enemy, were it not itself the enemy of licentiousness and vice. Men are irreligious because they are first vicious, and they hate the truth of Christianity because they hate its practice. Could we but induce them to change their lives, we should find it no very hard matter to change their judgment.

He that is a good man is three-fourths on his way

to be a Christian, wheresoever he lives and whatsoever he is called. It is with insincere Christians now as with the Israelites of old, "Hast thou brought us out of a land that floweth with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness?" The Cross is, as it was in St. Paul's time, to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the Greeks foolishness. Whether we look at the generations of old, or in the world around us, or into our own lives, we shall see that the faith which is so easy to innocence becomes difficult and unsettled in exact proportion as that innocence is preserved or lost; that doubt is the after-thought and not the motive of that evil heart of unbelief.

"Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
And these reciprocally those again :
Our mind and conduct mutually imprint
Their stamp and image on each other's mint."

Eve had never heeded Satan's suggestions to unbelief had she not longed to taste of the forbidden fruit. Lot's sons-in-law were given over to sin, and then they mocked at the warning to escape with their lives. The sons of Eliab and their followers disputed the authority of Moses and Aaron, and the priesthood also, not because they could disprove the divine commission of their chiefs, but because they were disappointed in their expectation of carnal enjoyment, and would not obey the commandment which had been sent to them from heaven just before they rebelled. "Seek not after your own heart and with your own eyes." Disappointment preceded dis-

belief. Balaam knew very well that God would not alter his instructions, for out of his own mouth that wicked servant had said, "God is not a man, that He should lie; . . . hath He said, and shall He not do it? and hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" He knew that he was following the wages of unrighteousness when he said to the angel, "If it displease thee, I will get me back again," but his heart was set on Balak's silver and gold, and he ran greedily after his reward to his destruction. And so in the New Testament the lawyer only wanted some excuse for not obeying the commandments which he had just repeated, for not doing his duty to his neighbour when he asked, "Who is he?"; and the young man who came to Jesus for instruction went away sorrowful, convinced that the counsel which he had received was just what he ought to follow, but refusing to conform his will with his duty, and surrendering the faith of his soul to the desire of his senses, because he had great possessions. Rather than cast his wheat into the sea, he would run the risk of shipwreck.

Or, if we regard those of our acquaintance who openly declare their unbelief, or, having a form of godliness, practically deny the power of it, do we consider that they are competent to decide upon subjects which are foolishness to the natural man, and can only be spiritually discerned? Have they patiently tested that which they reject? Are they learned in the Scriptures, and do they study them

with a prayerful interest, and not in a captious, controversial spirit? Sir Isaac Newton said to Dr. Halley, when he was declaiming against Christianity, "Dr. Halley, I am always glad to hear you when you speak about astronomy or of mathematics, because these are subjects which you have studied and well understand; but you should not talk of Christianity, for you have not studied it. I have, and am quite certain that you know nothing of the matter."

Are these unbelievers men of high and noble purposes, large-hearted, unselfish, brave, pure, gentlemen, despising all that is mean, and cruel, and foul, and false? Or are they, as a rule, selfish, licentious, arrogant, wise in their own conceit, and only considerate of those who promote their enjoyments? Are they, as a rule, the men whom you would desire to introduce to your mother, or sister, or wife; from whom you would seek advice in perplexity, or consolation in trouble? Do you find in the man, who speaks or lives in opposition to the Christian faith, the "friend that loveth at all times, and the brother born for adversity"? Is he gentle and easy to be entreated, or is he sudden and quick in quarrel, bitter and unforgiving? Is not the evil heart of unbelief warm only in self-indulgence, and cold to all beside?

We of the priesthood have a large and painful experience of the grievous harm which sin inflicts upon faith. When a shadow falls upon the happy face of boyhood, or a lurid light upon the beauty of

girlhood, when the merry voice becomes harsh and painful, and the frank smile of confidence is exchanged for the sullen look, we are not surprised to see irreverence take the place of devotion, indifference instead of anxiety, or to hear of disobedience, loss of affection, cessation of prayers, at home. Or when young men come to us and complain that it is so hard to bear constant sarcasm, so hard to see those constant sneers, so hard to resist those invitations to taste of forbidden fruit;—who are they that thus blaspheme and ridicule and tempt? Are they not those who have lost innocence and affect to despise it? What is your recollection, your estimate now of those who first suggested doubt and unbelief, who first said to you, “There is no harm; everybody does it; eat, drink, and be merry”?

Or, again, when men and women come to us for instruction and relief, with the exceeding bitter cry, “I cannot believe; I cannot give myself to religion; I know that it is right and beautiful, that its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace, yet something holds me back. It calls, but I cannot follow; I admire, but I cannot copy.” We find, on inquiry, in all these cases, that the heart is preoccupied; that there is an idol in the temple of the soul,—God sitteth, as before, above the cherubims, but other lords have dominion over them. Dark clouds have come between them and the Sun of Righteousness. Their iniquities have separated them and their God, and their sins have

hid His face from them. Not until it has been said by the All-Merciful, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgression, and as a cloud thy sin," and not until those clouds have dissolved in tears of repentance, can the divine light shine upon that soul. The upper room must be prepared and made ready, or there can be no Lord's Supper there.

Take your own experience. When did you first find religion irksome? When were you first inclined to dispute, to resist, to ignore it? Was it not when you were tempted to commit, or had committed, sin? Was it not when some evil fascination, some lewd impulse, allured you, that you first wished the words had never been spoken, "I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart;" and you said to yourself, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" Was it not when you were enticed to do evil secretly, and were deceived by the whisper, "Tush! the Lord shall not see; neither shall the Lord of Jacob regard it," that you thought with trembling of those other words, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good;" "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known;" "God shall bring every work unto judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good or bad"?

Yes, those first seeds of disobedience, those early transgressions, which were unjust, revengeful, dishonest, those first irrevocable words, which were pro-

fane, or obscene, or untrue—these were steps over the boundaries, which God had set around our fair ground and goodly heritage, into the wilderness of unbelief. It is when we purposed to do evil, or have done it, that religion becomes an offence to us, and we say of it, as Ahab said of Elijah and Micaiah, “Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?” “Art thou he that troubleth Israel?” “I hate him, because he does not prophesy good of me, but evil.”

Sin acts upon faith as disease upon vegetation. So long as a plant is in the vigour of health, it is beyond the influence of blight or mildew, nor is it infested by insects; but when the roots are injured by excess or lack of moisture, or the branches and foliage are scorched or starved, it droops and decays in a debility which is hopeless unless the circumstances are changed. And there is something in the poisoned sap which attracts and nourishes its most destructive foes. And so, where with patient culture, and good soil, and a pure air, and the sunshine of heaven, there might have been sweet flowers and luscious fruits, there is only pollution and disease and death.

There are many other causes, secondary and supplemental, of this evil heart of unbelief. The pride of intellect, rationalism, materialism, agnosticism, professing high motives, and assuming great names, and proud superiority over those whom they denounce as slaves of superstition, because they submit their reason to their faith. There are mental as well as carnal lusts. The warning sounds in our ears

throughout the Testaments, Old and New, "Beware of false prophets;" "Beware of Shemaiah the Nehe-lamite, for he caused you to trust not the light;" "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

The people of the Hebrews heard declarations and saw manifestations of the one true God; but though they were without excuse, they became vain in their own imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, and they worshipped the images of wood, and brass, and silver, and gold. The Christian has the witness within himself, if he will listen and heed, and "to feel a thing true is a higher security than any laboured argument;" but too often that witness has been expelled by disobedience, and an idol set up in its place. When this mere human wisdom is asked, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" the answer is, "Yes, or I will not own Him." Wiser than Solomon—"No man can find out the work that God maketh;" wiser than Paul—"Unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out;" it ignores the evidences, the *antiquity*, of a religion whose Founder was foreordained before the foundation of the world, yet whom you and I worship to-day; its *prophecies*, fulfilled and in fulfilment; its *miracles*, as manifest now in their transforming spiritual influence as when the blind saw and the lepers were cleansed; its *universal adaptation* in every time and clime; its sublime superiorities to

all other forms of belief. It forgets the countless exaltations of our humanity—not only of manhood, but of womanhood, so degraded by all false religions, so dignified by the Incarnation. It forgets that we owe to Christianity the purest and the surest happiness we know—the happiness of home, “hearts of each other sure;” that it has taught us a grander courage than that which the soldier shows in the compulsion and excitement of the fight; patience in all phases of pain; the resignation which says, “It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth good;” that it brings us a hopeful readiness to die, and that it has given to every nation which has accepted it all that makes it noble and great in history.

And in place of all that it overlooks or denies, what has reason, with all its vaunting, brought us, or what does it propose to bring? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah—the idols of a mere philosophy? Tell me of a benefit which unbelief has conferred in compensation for all the mischief which it seeks to do. Show me a home which is happier, a life which is brighter, from the theories of the sceptic or the writings of the agnostic, except so far as they have established, in far more instances than they would care to know, the faith which they would propose to destroy. Here is the answer: “Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”

No; God has given us our reason, as He gave the Law to His people Israel, to be our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. He has set to it bounds which it cannot pass; and when we come to them we must take the hand of faith by which He would lead us onward and upward.

“Reason’s glimmering ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a brighter day.
How can the less the greater comprehend?
Or finite reason reach infinity?
For what could fathom God were more than He.”

Reason leads us to the door of the sanctuary, and then faith takes us by the hand. “If thou canst not understand the pulses of thine arteries, the motion of thy blood, the seat of thy memory, the rule of thy dreams, thy diseases and thy distempers, things that thou bearest about thee, that cause thee pain and sorrow, it is not to be expected that thou shouldst understand the secrets of God, the causes of His will, the impulses of His Grace, the manner of His Sacraments, and the economy of His Spirit.”*

If we would reach the haven where the immortal spirit longs to be, faith must steer by the compass of revelation. As we read in the “Advancement of Learning,” we must leave the pinnace of human reason and go into the ship of the Church, which must alone be governed by a divine sea-needle to direct her course aright.

And so far from faith in the revelation contracting

* Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

reason, faith accepted and adopted is the consistent development of reason unto perfection. Is it not reason to expect that the Creator would make such a revelation? "I had rather be an atheist," it has been said, "than believe in a God who kept His creatures in such a darkness and despair." What would you think of a father who never told his son a word about his affection, his heritage, or his duty?

Philosophy asks with Pilate, "What is truth?" There is only one answer: "I am the Truth." St. Augustine wrote that he had read the writings of the great Greek and Roman authors with deep interest and high admiration, but he had not found in them any such words as those which spake so directly to his heart and to his need, "Come unto Me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Impatience, again, produces unbelief. It is another form of rationalism, which, while it professes to accept Christianity, does not hesitate to alter the conditions on which alone it can be understood and practised. It accommodates, it alters, it misreads the divine instructions, and then, because it fails, it doubts. We smile at the child, who puts a seed or a twig into its little garden, and comes next day to look for flower or fruit, as though, like Jonah's gourd, it had grown up in the night. But what do we, who are so confident that we have put away childish things? We say brief, hurried prayers, and then, because they are not answered just when and how

we wish, we think that they are not heard. We make some feeble effort, give some paltry gift, and because we are not lauded and thanked, we are offended.

“One good deed, dying tongueless,
Slaughters a thousand waiting upon that.”

We hear people say, “I went to church, but I got no good.” What good? Forgiveness, comfort, instruction, hope? Did they feel the need of them? Was it evident, from the reverent abasement, earnestness with which they prayed, that they were indeed, as they described themselves, “miserable sinners” at the feet of One who alone could pardon? Could all men know, from their eager, hearty supplication, that they were addressing One who is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God by Him? Or do they seem to say, as they sit at their ease, with Ephraim, “They shall find no iniquity in me;” or with the Laodicean, “I am rich, and in need of nothing,” not knowing that they are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked?

We may gratify our evil desires at once. The harlot smiles, and the wine sparkles in the glass. We need not wait for the pleasures of iniquity. Satan says, “Here and now.” God says, “There, hereafter.” It is written, “In your patience possess ye your souls;” and whoever obeys the instruction will have David’s blessing, “I waited patiently for the Lord, and He hath inclined unto me, and heard my call; He has put a new song in my mouth, even a thanksgiving unto our God.”

Misrepresentations of religion, exaggerations of its severity, which have not the warranty of the Scripture nor the authority of the Church, coercions and restrictions, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear; incline men to unbelief. A narrow bigotry, which has learned no language but its own shibboleth, and can see no good in those who differ from it; which "limits the Holy One of Israel," forgetting—

"That the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind,
And the heart of the Eternal
Is so wonderfully kind.

"But we make that love too narrow,
With false limits of our own;
And we magnify His strictness
With a zeal He will not own."

And I would mention, as a very sad and common example of this severity, the harm which is done to children, and to young men and maidens, by those parents and teachers who set religion before them rather as a compulsory task than as a message of love, and seek to enforce obedience by the curses of Ebal, rather than to win it by the blessings of Gerizim. What is the result? A superficial formalism, and the "worst form of atheism—hypocrisy." Constraint makes religion odious; love makes a thousand conversions to one which is caused by fear.

Irreverence in speech or action, wild words on sacred subjects, a forgetful apathy in holy places, light jests on religious subjects, puns upon Scripture,

riddles and comic songs upon scriptural and other sacred subjects, careless sarcasms,—these not only indicate, but they aggravate, with a subtle, deadly peril, the disease of unbelief. St. Paul is inspired to tell us that to serve God acceptably we must serve with reverence and godly fear. In vain we pray to our heavenly Father, “Hallowed be Thy Name,” if we do not always utter and hear it with a profound respect and humility; or if, ourselves loving salutations in the market-place, and making profound obeisance to our rulers here, we heed not the proclamation of the King of kings, that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow. In vain we come into His palace without sign of fear or of love.

Good Isaac Walton thus speaks of one who was irreverent and profane: “He is no companion for me, for most of his conceits are either Scripture jests or lascivious jests, for which I count no man witty: for the devil will help a man that way inclined to the first; and his own corrupt nature, which he always carries with him, to the second; but a man who entertains a company with wit and mirth, and leaves out the sin, he is the man for me.”

There are many, who call themselves Christian gentlemen, who seem to think that humorous imaginations and incidents—“good stories,” as they term them—must be either profane or obscene, and who have not the refinement, much less the religion, to distinguish between the use and the abuse of wit.

One of the wittiest of men said, "When wit is combined with sense or information, when it is softened by benevolence and is restrained by strong principle, when it is in the hands of a man who loves honour, justice, decency, good-nature, morality, and religion (which includes them all), wit is then a beautiful and delightful part of our nature. Man could direct his ways by plain reason, and support his life by tasteless food; but God has given us wit, and flavour, and brightness, and perfumes, and music to enliven the days of man's pilgrimage, and to charm his pained steps 'o'er the burning marl.' " *

* Sydney Smith.

VII.

UNBELIEF.

II. THE RESULTS.

“Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”—ST. MATT. xv. 19.

“WHEN lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” When concupiscence prevails over the conscience, and the will, abusing its liberty, corrupts the understanding, and the law of the mind surrenders itself to the law of the members, and the spirit in regenerate men is expelled by carnal hostilities, it becomes almost impossible to distinguish any longer between the cause and the consequence of unbelief.

We doubt because we have disobeyed, and we disobey because we doubt.

When the soul descends from the vantage-ground of faith and innocence, it leaves a pure sweet air, the clear light and genial warmth of the sunshine upon the hill of Zion, for the mists and miasma and lurid heat of the valley of the children of Hinnom, the valley of the shadow of death; but though the

descent is swift and easy, the distance is so great that it seems to be slow, and though the whole scene is finally changed, all joy darkened, and the mirth of the land gone, the surroundings alter so gradually that the traveller does not note the transformation.

I have read of a criminal who endured the most cruel torments upon the rack with a marvellous resolution, under the condition (according to the custom of that time and place) that if he went through the ordeal without confessing his crime, he would escape death. And when he was asked how he found the courage and the power, he replied that before he was to ascend the rack, he caused the picture of a jibbet to be drawn upon his foot, and that when the pain became intense he fixed his eyes upon it, and that the fear and abhorrence of dying such a death, if he confessed, enabled him to bear, without making the confession, which would have realized the vision before him, the terrible torture of the rack. And, in like manner, it would be good for us if, when we are undergoing temptations from which we could find relief by surrender and concessions, and which have such a powerful influence upon us that they seem to be irresistible to our poor, weak, corrupted nature—it would be good for us to fix our eyes, as did the criminal, upon that which will follow our defeat; to realize, so far as we can, the sure degradation of “sorrow dogging sin.”

It would be good for you young men if, when

temptation was whispering words sweeter than honey, yet be they very swords, in your ears, "Life is short and tedious;" "Time a passing shadow, let us enjoy the present and leave no flower unplucked;" "Let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness, and let us leave tokens of our cheerfulness in every place;"—it would be well for you to hear and heed that voice which speaks to you from heaven, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire"—the consuming fire of carnal lust—"and compass yourselves about with sparks"—instead of following the light of the Spirit: "walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks which ye have kindled; this shall ye have of Mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." "Be sure your sin will find you out." The heathen knew it, and confessed—

"The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us."

• And as with carnal, so with mental sins; as with murders, adulteries, fornications, and thefts, so with evil thoughts, false witness, blasphemy, unbelief. If any Christian is beginning to doubt the principles which he learnt from his father, and the power of the prayers which he was taught at his mother's knee, to question such things as transcend his understanding or thwart his inclinations, to deny the inspiration of the Scriptures before he has searched them, the divine institution of the Church before he has read its history, to criticize the doctrine and creeds of Christendom as though they were modern

essays; if he would learn from the common examples how doubt leads to disputation, and disputation to denial, and denial to hostility and hate; if he would take to heart the pitiful confessions of those who have lost their first love; if he could hear, as we of the priesthood so often hear, "It has gone, and I cannot regain it;"—how would such an one rejoice to feel that, still in the great Ark of safety, he had not made shipwreck of his faith! What thankful joy to wake out of his dismal dreams to the brightness of his Father's house; to go forth, after his restless fear, into the fresh air, amid the singing birds; to rise up, like the lame man, and go with the Apostles into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God!

For what does a man gain in exchange for his faith? A mess of pottage for his birthright as a child of God and an inheritor of heaven; the rewards of divination, and to be constrained to dwell with Mesech, and to have his habitation in the tents of Kedar, in place of the approbations of conscience, the communion of saints, and the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Our whole being, every phase of our existence, every thought, every word, every action, is changed as we lose our faith. The world in which we live is contracted more and more. We are like the prisoner in the story, "The Man in the Iron Shroud," who sees the walls of his cell slowly closing in to crush him. We are as sailors, who have roved over

boundless seas, in some sunless, landlocked, crowded, and pestilential port. That which we can handle and see, touch and taste, which we think we can prove, which "we know to be a fact,"—that is our boundary of belief; and the grand, beautiful, infinite, eternal universe, in which we lived as children with Him who made it and redeemed it, with the angels and with the saints, is shut and known to us no more. The ladder which reached from earth to heaven, and on which we saw the angels come and go, has disappeared; because, of course, prayer goes with faith. First it becomes a form, then a weariness; then it is shortened, said irregularly once a day, discontinued. And then the words which, so tradition tells us, were heard in the temple at Jerusalem just before the city was destroyed, "Let us depart hence," might be said of that prayerless soul. "Ichabod, the glory is departed;" "Ephraim is joined to his idols: let him alone."

And then follows a period, the most deplorable, the most fearful, in the faithless life, a season in which the unbeliever is satisfied with a sense of his own security in sin, when he is persuaded that because he feels no longer any hesitation or scruple before his self-indulgence, or regret or remorse afterwards, that his pleasures are not only sweet but harmless. The understanding is darkened, as St. Paul writes, by the blindness of the heart, and the man, being past feeling, gives himself over unto lasciviousness.

“I sin, and heaven and earth go round
As if no evil deed were done ;
As if God’s blood had never flowed,
To hinder sin or to atone.

“I walk the earth with lightsome step,
Smile at the sunshine, breathe the air,
Do my own will, nor ever heed
Gethsemane, and that long prayer.”

What is the explanation? By degrees the conscience has been seared; drop by drop, as with the eggs of the throstle in the petrifying cave, that, which might have been life and music, has been changed to silence and to stone. There has been ossification of the spiritual heart; the perception of the true and the false, the power to distinguish between right and wrong, has been first confused and then destroyed. Men call evil good, and good evil. They put darkness for light, and light for darkness. They put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. They start to go in one direction, and then, as though drunk with wine or paralytic, they swerve and stagger elsewhere. They are unconscious of evil—unconscious that “there is no such fault, as counting we have no fault.” So men have slept in the snow-drift, and been found frozen to death; so is the mortification painless, which puts an end to hope. But, blessed be God, there is a voice which can arouse and save men from such sleep as this.

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

But there is something worse than apathy—anti-pathy. Vice not only loses all love of virtue, but

it goes on to hate it; ashamed openly to avow its aversion, for "hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue," or only expressing it in sneer and ridicule—but abhorring it. Ahab was not satisfied in sending Micaiah to the dungeon to eat the bread of affliction; not at ease, though he was out of sight and hearing; "but I hate him," he said; "because he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." And so, as the idle set themselves against the diligent, and the impure against the chaste, so they who are fallen away from their faith are the bitter foes of the believer. They have a thousand excuses for their dislike—that he is affected, and sets up to be better than his neighbours; that he is narrow-minded, bigoted, and superstitious; that he is cold and insensible to temptation; that he is acting a part with some selfish purpose, to win the favour of those who are in authority. But that which really provokes their displeasure, is the faith which they have left; his faith, and all that springs from it. Like the Samaritans, who would not receive Christ because His face was set as though He would go to Jerusalem, so the mere worldling and the sceptic regard with aversion all who are walking upon the heavenward ways.

Is it not so? Do not we find that unbelief in the Author of all goodness is followed by an opposition to all good? The slothful servant in the parable accused his employer of being an austere man, reaping where he had not sown, and gathering where

he had not strawed. And so the modern infidel dares to impugn the goodness of his Maker, and renounces Him as cruel in promoting sin and sorrow. Men do not only judge others by themselves, but God Himself, as it is written, "These things hast thou done, and I held My tongue, and thou thoughtest wickedly that I am even such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things that thou hast done." So with our literature; as some of our writers become unfaithful, they become impure. They are not satisfied with sneering at religion, but they would have us worship the pomp and sensuality of the world, and see something to admire in the mere gratification of those passions which we share with the animals.

They are opposed to order and authority; for how should he who ignores the Creator, and sets His laws at defiance, respect the edicts of the creature? Who are they of whom St. Paul speaks as boasters, proud, disobedient to parents, without natural affection, truce-breakers, despisers of those that are good, traitors; men, he tells us, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof"? And the chaplain of the gaol, and the superintendent of police, will tell you, that of mankind the most dangerous and degraded, are they who have lost all thought, all love, all fear of God.

So with a nation; as the righteousness of faith exalts, so the evil of unbelief dishonours and destroys. The testimony of statesmen is unanimous, that of

all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. "In vain," says Washington, "would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labour to subvert these pillars." They are as precious to the politician as to the man of piety. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it be simply asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in our courts of justice? Nor let us indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of a peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that morality can prevail independently of religious principles. "We believe," writes the Archbishop of Canterbury, "the Christian faith to be essential not only to the true expansion of intelligence, but to the substantial foundation of morals."

Is it not recorded in all history that "righteousness alone exalteth a nation, and that sin is a reproach to any people"?

Those were noble words of Cicero to the Roman Senate: "Let us never be misled by our self-conceit to suppose that we have conquered Spain by our numbers, nor Gaul by our strength, nor Carthage by our policy, nor the people of this land, the Italians and the Latines, by our innate cleverness;

but by our piety, by our religion, and by that wisdom which acknowledges that all things are directed and governed by supreme powers, we have overcome the nations of the earth."

And so we find that in all the civilized world, of the men to whom that world was most under obligation, the mighty intellects of the time, that although God had not revealed Himself to them as to us in these latter days by His Son, yet were they, as a rule, religious according to the religion which they professed. In the literature, for example, of Greece and Rome, we read everywhere of a Supreme Power, of worship in temples and altars, of consecrated persons and places. Find what fault we may with their adaptation to human infirmities—adaptation to mere sentiment, to sensuality, and the popular wish, we must nevertheless admire in these writings the awful sense of an Omnipotent Creator, Ruler, and Judge. We find in their books the admiration of virtue and the condemnation of vice, the benediction of goodness (as they saw it) and the execration of evil. In their grief and in their joy, perplexity and success, defeat and victory, they came with their sacrifice of humiliation or of thankfulness, and brought their prayers and praises to the Lord of heaven and earth. All their great exploits were commended, before they were begun, to Him. Supplications were made before an expedition or a journey, for deliverance from the danger of land and sea. The Greeks—Achilles the soldier, Ulysses the king,

Plato the philosopher, Xenophon the historian—and the Romans also, offered libations to their gods before their meals and after them. No legacy of learning, no example of heroism, has been bequeathed to us by the impious and the profane. Even the ruins of antiquity proclaim that, with the builder and the sculptor, the religion which he professed was the supreme thought that inspired his work.

Yet more signally is this testimony before us, when we regard those later endowments with which, since the Day of Pentecost, intellect and art and industry have enriched the world. In Europe, in England, our Christian faith has given us our universities and schools, our glorious cathedrals and churches, our hospitals, charities, and doles. It has brought into our libraries the plays of Shakespeare, the poetry of Milton, the philosophy of Bacon, the science of Newton. It has given to us the oratorios of Handel, and the masses of Mozart. What great work has been done, what grand building has been raised, what great book has been written, what famous picture has been painted, by an unbeliever?

And in this, as in all things, history repeats itself. Just as the writings of antiquity and the monuments of its art bear testimony to religious allegiance and to an admiration of truth and piety, with earnest cravings for that further revelation which has been given to us, so the works of to-day, which are to be prominent, will be achieved by men who have been faithful to that revelation. It is not only that the

miserable profanity and silliness of much modern literature will be clean forgotten with their writers, as dead men out of mind, but those elaborate treatises, which, professing to be apologies for ignorance, manifestly declare a proud confidence in superior knowledge,—these also, with their authors, fifty years hence will be unknown.

The signs of destruction may be seen always in disunion. Unbelievers may be unanimous in saying, "There is no God, there is no Christ, there is no Holy Spirit, no Church, the Bible is not inspired, there will be no resurrection, no judgment, no hereafter for us;" but when they begin to build, where they have pulled down, they are like the builders of Babel in the confusion of tongues. It may be said of them, as a great Roman philosopher once said of his brethren, "Each is charmed with his own theory, but despises all the others." Who is to make the plans—the Socinian or the Pantheist, the materialist or the agnostic? Alas! these unbelievers "have uprooted goodly forests, they have made strange havoc with the cedars of Lebanon and the oaks of Basan; but they have planted no vines nor fig trees, under which posterity may dwell in safety." They despise the Church of the past; they make no Church in the present: it is, as it has been, and will be always with them, the Church of the future. "Man never is, but always to be, blest." "Happiness is the gay to-morrow of the mind, which never comes." Ah! what a fearful waste there has been

of mighty intellect and vigorous life! What a waste in a far-off land of the goodly heritage which might have been enjoyed so happily in the fair ground at home! What a hopeless siege of that great city of which it is written, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that is raised up in judgment against thee thou shalt condemn"! What raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame, as they dash themselves against the rock of ages! Alas! the evil they have done not only to themselves but to others; for it has been said but too truly, that though they can never destroy Christ, yet, like Herod, they may kill much that is true and innocent in their attempts to do so.

Who can tell where this will end? And meanwhile the results are terrible. "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to him through whom the offence cometh! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depths of the sea, than that he should offend one of Christ's little ones."

We are told in "the new Book of Genesis," written by our modern scribes and the disputers of this world, that "inasmuch as it dissipates the dream of Paradise, and does away with the tragedy of the Fall, it cancels at once the need and scheme of redemption, and so leaves the historical Churches of Christendom crumbling away from their very foundations." So

here there is an end of our responsibility to God (if there be a God), and our neighbour has no longer any claim upon us. There is an end of worship and of prayer, and, except as matter of expediency, of purity, honesty, industry, and temperance. Henceforth we are to regard all our yearnings after goodness and happiness, all our bright previsions of peace and rest and beauty, all our shameful consciousness of pretence and pride and selfishness, all our detestation of vice, and our admiration of virtue—ay, the assured sense of Christ within us—as mere imaginations. What shall we say? Why, that if their audacious propositions were not so perilous to the souls of those who make them, and to some of those who hear them, they were not only to be denounced as profane and blasphemous, but to be derided as silly and absurd.

God dethroned, and evolution reigning in His stead “The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God;” for who in the world is a more ignorant and wretched person than he who is an atheist? “A man may better believe that there is no such person as himself, and that he is not a being, than that there is no God. For himself can cease to be, and once was not, and shall be taken from what he is, and in very many periods of his life knows not that he is (for so it is with him every night he sleeps); but none of these things can happen to God, and if he knows it not he is a fool. Can anything be more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth

can come by chance, whereas all the skill of art cannot make a single blade of grass? To see rare effects and no cause; an excellent government and no prince; a motion without an immovable; a circle without a centre; a time without eternity; a second without a first; a thing that begins not from itself; and therefore not to perceive that there is something from which it does begin, which must be without beginning;—these things are so against philosophy and natural reason, that he must needs be without understanding who can accept them. This is the atheist. The thing framed says that nothing framed it. The tongue never made itself to speak, and yet talks against Him that did, and says, ‘That which is made is, and that which made it is not.’ ”

Thus far I have attempted to justify my convictions. First, that unbelief arises mainly from these causes, from disobeying, and from a wish to disobey, the dictates of conscience and the revealed will of God. It follows, and is an apology for, sin. Was there ever a sin without an excuse? The woman said, “The serpent beguiled me;” and the man said, “The woman Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” And their son said, when God asked, “Where is thy brother?” “I know not; am I my brother’s keeper?” “If,” says Massillon, “men had never had passions, or if religion had countenanced them, unbelief would not have appeared upon earth.” Secondly, unbelief is the outcome of an arrogant confidence in the power of human reason, of an

endeavour of the finite to comprehend the infinite. And it proceeds from, thirdly, a stolid and impatient ignorance which will make no experiment nor inquiry.

So Tertullian said to the heathen, "You condemn without trying to understand; you blame that which you have never examined; you blaspheme you know not what." And the consequences of unbelief are to the soul just what creeping paralysis is to the body—a gradual loss of vitality; the spiritual apprehensions are weakened; the appreciation of true beauty, purity, and innocence, the sympathy with suffering, the idea of self-sacrifice, love, awe, humility, disappear and die. The motives to action are enfeebled and debased, and as water cannot rise higher than its spring, he who has low and limited intentions imputes them to all others. He will tell you that all religion is either the superstitious fear of children singing in the dark to dispel or disguise their silly terror, or that it is only a sham, assumed like the phylactery to attract observation or to gain some worldly advantage. He will tell you that generosity and courage and forbearance are likewise mere ostentations, the baits of pride to attract admiration, that chastity and sobriety are mere matters of temperament or immunity from temptation, and that men and women are virtuous only because it pays them better to be so. They would follow their own imaginations, if they dare, and there was no risk of discovery. They would not be honest were it safe to steal. Who would trust

such an accuser of the brethren? What is to restrain him from deceiving, cheating, injuring others?

My brothers, be not unequally yoked together with these unbelievers. If you would make friends who will be true to you, have nothing to say to those who will never suggest to you a noble thought or join you in a noble deed. Plead with them, pray for them, never make them your friends, or you will but lean on a bruised reed, which will go into your hand and pierce it. Such a friendship, the friendship of this world, of those who live for it, in it, and as if there were no other, is enmity with God. My younger brethren, I would especially entreat you to make this a subject of earnest prayer, "O God, choose Thou for me my friends." You should not only quote those familiar words of Shakespeare and admire them as poetry, but you should make them your golden rule—

"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel ;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade."

VIII.

UNBELIEF.

III. THE REMEDIES.

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”—ISAIAH lv. 7.

IF this be so, if unbelief be the “daughter of such bad causes, the sister of such bad adjuncts, and the mother of such bad effects ;” if men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, and the god of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not ; in brief, if unbelief is so inexcusable, so perilous to those who, like the foolish Galatians, will not obey the truth, although before their eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among them ; and if our Saviour declares it to be so, “when the Comforter is come, He will reprove the world of sin, because ye believed not on Me ;” and again, “He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God ;”—why, then it is evident that we can no longer regard unbelief as a matter of conscience or of opinion, but

as a sin heinous and abominable, or it had not provoked such a terrible sentence from the lips of infinite love.

Wherefore He warned men, and we His messengers must repeat His warnings, that when they wilfully and obstinately reject that which God has revealed, they become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart is darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they become fools, and change the truth of God into a lie. Look at those arrogant Pharisees and unbelieving Jews, who had agreed, if any man did confess that Jesus was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue (intolerance is a sure sign that there is no real love of truth)—see them brow-beating, hear them cross-examining the man to whom, blind from his birth, our Lord had just restored the blessing of sight, and when they could not deny the miracle, listen to the miserable answer that they made when he said, on whom the miracle was wrought, “If this Man were not of God, He could do nothing,” “Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?” and they cast him out. Nay, when He who had wrought the miracle spoke to them soon afterwards similar words of warning, they asked Him sneeringly, “Are we blind also?” and received the sorrowful answer, “If ye were blind ye should have no sin, but now ye say ye see, therefore your sin remaineth.”

There was One close to them, as able, as He was willing, to lead them from darkness to light, to do

that for their souls which He had just done for the eyes of the blind. The proof of His supernatural power was before them, and so was the perfect example of His most holy life. The words of One, who spoke as never man, were sounding in their ears, but they would not listen. They blind! They for whom all made way with admiring look and low obeisance, when, with their proclamation of piety on frontlet and phylactery, they occupied the uppermost room at feasts, and the chief seats at the synagogue; who fasted twice in the week, and gave tithes of all they possessed! Were they to humble themselves like some little child who had done wrong? Were they to be pupils who had been teachers, to exchange the mastery for service? They would be blind indeed to give up a position of authority and influence, with which they were perfectly satisfied, for degradation and dependence, and they knew not what besides.

Is this uncommon in the nineteenth century? Nay, is it quite unknown to your experience and mine? Do we never say to young men now, did our elders never say to us, "You are wasting your time and your money, your intellectual and physical power, in seeking happiness where you never find it. You know that even in laughter your heart is sorrowful, and the end of your mirth is heaviness"? And do we never hear, did we never say, "Let us alone; let us be as happy as we can in our own way; we like it the best, and we believe in it far more than in yours"?

And so, just in proportion as we cease to believe and to worship the true, we believe and worship the false. We transfer, abuse, and degrade the service which we should have consecrated; we set our affection upon things on the earth, and as the prophet says, "We are mad upon our idols." We ridicule the idea of worshipping the golden calf; are there none whose thoughts and time are absorbed by their adoration of riches? We despise the ancient mythologies as silly and superstitious, the sacrifices that were offered to the goddess of beauty or the god of wine; and yet how many thousands, in Christian England to-day, are the wretched slaves of lust and of drink!

Men will tell you they cannot help it; but they have brought this helplessness upon themselves. They consented; they were not constrained. They yielded again and again, until they lost the power of resistance—nay, the wish to resist. A French nobleman wrote to Fénelon, entreating him not to pray for him, lest he should lose the enjoyment of the deadly sin in which he was living with his paramour. He recognized his slavery, but he hugged his chain. "Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians." So it may be until it is too late to change, too late to cry for mercy; when it is the time for justice.

So also it was in that sad history of the Apocryphal Scriptures; when those two wicked elders were inflamed with lust, "they perverted their own mind," it is

written, "and turned away their eyes, that they might not look unto heaven, nor remember just judgments." And so it may be, indeed, with a nation surrendering principles to policy, and right to might, the still small voice to the clamour of the people, "There, there, so would we have it"—God's riches to filthy lucre. The men of Gadara knew that the destruction of the swine was a just punishment of forbidden traffic, unlawful and unclean; they saw that their Divine Visitor was as powerful to do works of mercy, to confer pardon and peace, as to denounce and to destroy; but, if they accepted and obeyed Christ, what would become of their lucrative business? He would condemn it, and their great profits would be lost, and so the whole multitude of the country besought Him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear; and He went into the ship, and returned back again. Earthly, sensual, devilish, is the infatuation of sin. Selwyn told a friend that he had seen the coffin of Arthur More chained to that of his mistress.

But we may be quite sure, as they who know, not only from the Bible and the Church, but from the light and the music which religion has brought into their hearts, that although this sin of unbelief has become habitual, against many oppositions of warnings and conscience, and as the outcome of some form of persistent selfishness, whether it be of passion or of pride, and though God might accordingly, and in strict justice, have pronounced the sentence, "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone,"—yet in this, as

in all things, He is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish ; yea, many a time turneth He His wrath away, and will not suffer His whole displeasure to arise.

“For all the souls that were were forfeit once ;
And He who might the vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy.”

As “there is no man, to whom means are not administered, sufficient to produce that measure of faith which is requisite toward the good management of his life, and his rendering an account for it at God’s tribunal ; no man, also, to whom such means are afforded, whom the grace of God, who desireth that all men should be saved, and should come to a knowledge of the truth, does not in some degree excite to the due improvement of them :” * so it is certain that He follows us, though we have forsaken Him ; calls to us, as to the Church of Ephesus, when we have lost our first love, “Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent ;” appeals to our love and to our fears ; takes us away from our temptation, and in solitary places, and in sick chambers, and by the open graves in which our dear ones lie, or in the apprehension of our own death, pleads for the soul, until the defiled and unbelieving mind and conscience are seared, and there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

Too late ! Is not the thought, only the thought, that your soul, my soul, any soul for which the

* Isaac Barrow, ii. 90.

Saviour suffered, might go out into eternity in such terrible darkness and desertion, reprobate concerning the faith, in such a terror of despair—is it not enough to stir in us great searchings of heart, how we may strengthen in ourselves and others the faith which alone can save?

Will you not take this thought home with you to-night, my brothers, and dwell upon it with a godly sorrow, until you can say, “What carefulness it wrought in us, yea, what clearing of ourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!” Shall we not, like the merchant seeking goodly pearls, sell all that we have, having found this jewel of great price, and buy it? “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” “Faith,” says Hooker, “is the thing prescribed; for as in a chain, which is made of many links, if you pull the first, you draw the rest; and as in a ladder of many staves, if you take away the lowest, all hopes of ascending into the highest will be removed; so, because all the precepts and promises in the Law and in the Gospel do hang upon this one word *believe*, and because the last of the graces of God doth follow the first, that He glorifieth none but whom He hath justified, nor justifieth any but whom He hath called to a true and effectual and lively faith in Christ Jesus, therefore the Apostle exhorts us to build ourselves in our most holy faith, because that is the ground and glory of the whole building.”

And because, as in all diseases of body, mind, or soul, prevention is better and easier than cure, we must protect from the first our spiritual health against that which is of all most fatal, unbelief. We must watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. We must watch the life of the soul, which is its Faith, as a mother watches over her firstborn. It must breathe the pure air of innocence, and be fed with the sincere milk of the Word. It must be kept from infection, as you would fly from a street in which cholera raged, or in which there was not a house where there was not one dead. Parents allow their children to go where they please, see what they will, hear what they will, send them forth unwarned and unarmed, and then mourn to see them come back, having fallen among thieves, robbed and wounded. It is said they must know evil; they must come into the world, sooner or later—youth must have its fling. But if the goodman of the house had watched, the robber had not come in.

What shall we say, then, of those Christian fathers and mothers who watch so carelessly, that if the robbers come with plausible words and with a gay disguise, they themselves open the door and admit them? What shall we say when the unbeliever, who is not only living without God in the world, but in notorious sin, is received into the Christian's home, because he is amusing and clever, or because he has money or influence, or lives in what is called high society? We denounce the folly of that man who puts an enemy

into his own mouth to steal away his brains; what shall we say of the father who brings the adulterer and seducer, the spendthrift, the gambler, the drunkard, and, worst of all, the atheist, among his sons and daughters to steal away their souls?

We need something more than vigilance, if we would preserve our faith. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Therefore must we lift up our eyes and hearts thither, whence cometh our help; for He that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. He will preserve us from all evil; yea, it is even He that shall keep the soul.

We must *watch* and *pray*. They are inseparable, watchful faith and prayer. We cannot believe that God is our Father without going to Him, as loving children, to speak to Him and hear His voice. We cannot believe in Christ as our Saviour without seeking Him where He has promised to be—until we are quite sure that we have found Him; that He listens to us, and we know His voice. We cannot believe that God the Holy Ghost is our Teacher and Guide and Comforter without continually asking His instruction, His direction, and His answer of peace.

Here, perhaps, the sceptic may say, "You are begging the entire question; you make a circle of your own and argue round it. You take it for granted that what you have been taught to believe is true. You refuse inquiry, you ignore reason; you have neither proved the existence of Him to whom

you pray, nor shown proof that you will have what you pray for. We want the evidence of facts, such as we have in science ; we want logical, mathematical proofs." And our answer is, that we are arguing for a faith which, while it is in complete agreement with our reason, so far as our reason goes, takes us, as it were, by the hand, and leads us onward and upward, when reason can go no further ; which, when philosophy says, " All beyond is night," is " a lantern unto our feet, and a light unto our paths ;" which, when science confesses, " I find myself in the presence of an eternal, unchanging, irresistible power, but I know nothing about it," says, " Whom ye ignorantly worship, or refuse to worship, Him declare I unto you."

My reason is satisfied of the truth of Christianity by its evidences, its history, its existence, had there been no promises, no prophecies ; by its full explanation of all that had perplexed me, its exact adaptation to all my needs, its power of transformation in the lives of nations and of men, its alleviations of sorrow, its content in poverty, its hopeful willingness to die.

But beyond all this, and beyond all words, by that heavenly presence within, which, ever since the Day of Pentecost, has brought to Christians such a testimony as no human wisdom can teach or gainsay, that " the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." So long as we cherish and obey that presence, nor anything that defileth comes into the temple in which it dwells,

we can answer boldly when the Apostle asks, "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you?" Yea, thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift, we know it. And if every new discovery of science seemed to contradict revelation (I say *seemed*, because there can be ultimately no contradiction between God's Word and His works); if the critic were to raise continually new doubts and difficulties; if the Christian were to meet in debate and be defeated in argument, in the unanimous judgment of a public audience, by Atheist, Deist, Pantheist, Materialist, Rationalist, Positivist, and Agnostic, that divine presence would empower us to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, because greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

Great, no doubt, are the troubles of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. "Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

"Summer days

And moonlit nights He led us on our path,
Bordered with pleasant flowers; but when His steps
Were on the mighty ocean, when we passed,
With trembling feet, through nights of pain and loss,
His smile was sweeter and His love more dear;
And only heaven is better than to walk
With Christ at midnight over moonless seas."

Greater the troubles of the unrighteous—the first surrender of the nobler to the viler self, of the spiritual to the intellectual, or to the carnal element. Then the contemptible lies and the lurking in secret places, the fear of discovery, the treacheries by which

they deceive and are deceived, the envy and jealousy and malice, the disgust and exhaustion of satiety, the impotence and disease of excess; and none to deliver.

Who, that has had experience of both, would exchange the troubles of the righteous for the pleasures of sin? That was no mere figure of speech when David declared, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of ungodliness," or when his son said, "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith." He had lost everything which this world prizes most who was inspired to declare, "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Is there any lasting content without it? Strength saith, "I have met a stronger;" and beauty saith, "It will not stay;" and wealth says, "I cannot buy happiness;" and the scholar says, "I cannot learn it;" and art, "I find no model;" and science cries, "Not yet! not yet!" Once they thought, each one of them, that they were on the track, and were sure to find it. All history told them of failure, but they would not heed. Why should they fail? Simply because they are seeking happiness where it is not to be found, because man's soul is yearning for that which it has lost, and because this infinite void can only be filled by an infinite and unchangeable Object, that is, by the Deity Himself. Only from Him, as He has revealed Himself to us, can we receive the answer to our inquiry, "Who will show us any good?" Only

from that pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, can we ever slake the thirst which all earthly springs, all the rivers of Damascus, have had no power to quench. "The heart," said St. Augustine, "is made for God, and can never rest till it rests in Him."

Regard, I pray you, some of the glorious victories of the Christian faith; compare them with the achievements of philosophy, noble and sublime as they were, where the search after truth was earnest, and these searchers, not having the law, were a law unto themselves; yet how dim and maimed in contrast with our Gospel gifts! Look at the generations of old and see, one class regarding nature as uncorrupted, became the victims of pride; another condemning it as incurable, of sensuality. If, on the one hand, they possessed some knowledge of man's excellences, they were ignorant of his corruption; they might be raised from their voluptuousness, but they fell into vainglory. On the other hand, if they acknowledged the infirmity of human nature, they seemed to have no sense of its dignity, and while they escaped the seductions of vanity, they plunged into despair. Hence arise the various sects of Stoics and Epicureans, of Dogmatists and Academicians.

The Christian religion alone discovered the remedy for these evils; not by setting the one against the other, by the wisdom of this world, but by overthrowing them both by the simplicity of the Gospel,

which, while it elevates the just to a participation in the Divine nature itself, reveals to them that in this exalted state they bear yet within them the seeds of corruption.

Young men, regard, I pray you, the victories, the discoveries, of a simple faith; of a worldly, selfish heart released from the thoughts which are miserable and the devices which are uncertain, from the corruptible body which presses down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle which weighs down the mind, and soaring to the mountain-tops, from whence it sees, beyond the wilderness of this world, the land which is the glory of all lands, the faith which ever and anon gives us a glimpse, as it were, of heaven.

“As sometimes when adown the western sky
The fiery sunset lingers,
The golden gates swing inward noiselessly,
Unlocked by unseen fingers.
And as they stand a moment half ajar,
Gleams from the inner glory
Stream brightly through the azured vault afar,
And half reveal the story.”

What are the discoveries of science, my friends, vast and wonderful as they are, compared to the discoveries of faith? Had it been told to our forefathers, sixty years ago, not only that a message could be sent instantly from one end of England to the other, through mountains and woods and valleys and rivers, but that all the great events of the civilized world, political, commercial, and military, would be circulated in a few minutes, north, south, east, and west,—would not such prophecies have

seemed to them as fond dreams or as idle tales? And yet, wonderful as all this may be, what is it to the sending forth of universal messages through time and space? Not now and then, to this man or that, but always, everywhere, to all—announcements, commands, instructions, persuasions, encouragements, warnings, threatenings, now whispered, now thundered in our ears—millions of messages, millions of messengers, sent by the Creator through all creation, by the Saviour to all who may be saved, by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of regenerate men!

Science says to me, "You have a friend in America; I have found out a way by which you may communicate with him at once." Faith says to me, "You have a Friend in heaven, a loving Friend, who ever liveth to make intercession for you; go down on your knees, speak to Him, and He will hear you in an instant." Science says, "I will bring you in a few minutes an answer from your friends." Faith says, "I will bring to you the Friend Himself;" for this is His promise, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you." Science shows to me the brilliant electric light, which almost turns night to day. Faith shows me the light above the brightness of the sun; that is the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world; which shows me the way, when I am lost in the darkness of my ignorance and sin, and leads me to my rest; which shines through the gloom when I am drifting on stormy seas, and guides me to the haven where I

would be. It will lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death; and in that light shall I see light, when the day breaks and the shadows flee away, in that golden city which has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof, and the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light thereof.

Science shows me the admirable discoveries which have been made in our days for the relief and alleviation of physical pain, by the use of anæsthetics, and by surgical instruments of the most delicate and skilful construction. "I remember," writes a surgeon of European fame—"I remember performing an operation which only a few years ago would have been intensely painful, and attended with great loss of blood, but with the help of ether-inhalation, and by an instrument then recently invented, it was absolutely painless, and only a few drops of blood were shed. And an eminent physician who was sitting by remarked that if any one had told him five years ago that he could perform such an operation, without either pain or bloodshed, he should have set him down as insane." But there is only One, the Great Physician of our souls, who can bind up those that are broken in heart, and give medicine to heal their sickness.

"How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part, which laws or kings can cause or cure!"

There is only One who, when I am blind and speech-

less and deaf, the hands withered and the feet lame, when the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint—there is only One who can restore; and faith brings me to Him, and I touch the hem of His garment, and I hear His sweet loving voice, “Receive thy sight. Ephphatha, be opened. Rise up, and stand forth. Stretch forth thine hand. I will; be thou clean. Thy faith has saved thee; go, and sin no more.”

Then see how faith, how Christianity, exalts, ennobles, beautifies manhood and womanhood. What an awful sense it gives us of our dignity, our capacity, our destination, as children of God, members of Christ, inheritors of His kingdom, so that whoso hath this hope must seek to purify himself, even as He is pure. Contrast the man whom Christianity converts; compare him “as the Gospel finds him, with the man whom the Gospel forms.” He was learning, and never came unto a knowledge of the truth. Now he looks up with a Bible in his hand, and says, “Thou art the Way, the Truth, and the Life.”

And what more shall I say? “For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy to them that fear Him.” To the true believer is given that happiness which is the purest and sweetest we can know on earth—the happiness of making others happy; the luxury of doing good for Christ; doing works of mercy; despising shams and counterfeits—the sentimental charity (so-called) which listens and talks and sighs, but never goes to see; the ostentatious charity

“which,” as Bishop Wilson says, “is a greater beggar than any it gives to;” the niggard meanness which gives grudgingly and of necessity; the indiscriminate charity which will not trouble itself to inquire, or has not the courage to refuse;—despising these, and finding its sweet reward in the blessing of him that was ready to perish, and in the smile upon pale sorrow’s cheek.

Then the final “victory which overcometh the world, even our faith;” the love which endureth unto the end, faithful unto death; which, or ever the silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl is broken, can praise God with the last breath and say, “Thanks be to Him, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Oh, blessed hope, full of immortality, which whispers to us as we look upon our dead, “Only for a while; we shall meet hereafter; not dead, but sleepeth; thy brother shall rise again; not lost, but gone before;”—the blessed hope which spoke from that young faithful heart, when he said to his dying brother—

“And tell our white-haired father,
That in the paths he trod,
The child he loved the last on earth
Still walks and worships God.

“Tell him his last fond blessing yet
Hangs on my soul like dew,
And by its hallowing might I trust
Once more his face to view.

“And tell our gentle mother,
That on her grave I pour
The sorrows of my spirit forth,
As on her breast of yore.

“Happy art thou so soon, how soon,
Our good and bright to see !
Oh, brother, brother, may I dwell
Ere long with them and thee !”

Oh, blessed hope, so sure and certain, which shall dispel our fears when the message reaches us, “The Master is come, and calleth for thee” ! By the side of the king of terrors stands the King of life. “I always knew,” an old man said to me not long before he died, “that He would be nearest when I wanted Him most, and it is so.” It was a saying of old among the Jews that every good man had three friends—his possessions, the love of his kinsfolk and acquaintance, and his religion. Suddenly he received a summons to answer accusations, which had been brought against him, before the king. His earthly goods were useless ; his relations and companions went with him to the palace door, but could go no further ; but his religion entered with him, pleaded for him, and not only obtained his acquittal, but favours and honours from the king.

God help us to help each other ! “Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me ; . . . then shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.”

IX.

THE GENTLEMAN IN THE LOOSE BOX.

ONCE upon a time, before the joy of the land was darkened by disastrous harvests, and before Sydney Smith's joke concerning a country parson, who was so parsimonious in the application of soap, that "he seemed to have a good deal of his glebe on his own hands," became a very sad reality;—once upon a time, a clergyman kept a horse, and the man who groomed him discharged a great variety of other duties, including that of collecting weekly the alms of the congregation. On one occasion he had given up the plate, and was going back to his place, when a sudden recollection caused him to return and to whisper to his master, "If you please, sir, you must let me have it again, for I've forgotten the gentleman in the loose box," indicating with his thumb an individual who monopolized a spacious apartment, lined and cushioned and carpeted, and looking like a brand-new sleeping car, with one passenger, in the middle of a train of third-class carriages, filled with people!

"I've forgotten the gentleman in the loose box."

With all my heart do I pray and hope that he may soon be forgotten by us all—clean forgotten, as a dead man out of mind; and it will be, I trust, your unanimous desire, my brothers, to give him notice to quit, and to assist in his eviction. Already we have succeeded, in countless instances, in dislodging him from his position, and he is flying before us in sore perturbation of spirit, having well-nigh lost possession of his *faculties*. We must pursue until we have annihilated, even as Gideon pursued and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, who said, “Let us take unto ourselves the houses of God in possession.”

He (I am regarding this gentleman in the loose box as representing the Pew System) has done immeasurable harm—to religion, generally; to the Church of England, specially; and to social sympathies and intercourse.

To religion, natural and revealed. For reason, eyesight, experience, show us that God is no respecter of persons. His great gifts, light, heat, food, strength, beauty, wisdom, are for all. There is no preference nor precedence. And Revelation confirms and develops these true instincts. In the Old Testament I read a great deal about the construction of the Tabernacle, when God pitched His tent among men; of the pure gold, which was to be used for the Ark and the Mercy-seat; of the Altar and its vessels; of the pillars round about the court, filleted with silver; of the curtain of fine twined linen, blue and purple and scarlet; of the pure oil olive, beaten for the light,

to make the lamp to burn always. I read of men specially consecrated to conduct the services, but I don't read of any members of the congregation being admitted to special places and privileges on payment of money. The Tabernacle was made, the priests were maintained, the expenses were paid, by voluntary contributions, by offertories. The rich brought their offerings, and the poor brought their offerings, and God accepted them, not according to the market value, but according to the faith and love of the giver. He only, who knows the motive and how much men keep back as well as how much they give, can appraise the offering.

There is an instructive incident in the life of the good Bishop Selwyn. Before the consecration of a church in Auckland, a discussion arose as to the allotment of seats. A man, who had given a large sum, suggested that those who had given most should have the first selection. To the surprise of all, the bishop seemed to assent to this suggestion; "but," he inquired, "how are we to find this out?" "Oh," said the donor who had made the proposition, "there can be no difficulty in that respect—here is the list of subscriptions." "Very true," said the bishop; "but this does not tell us who has given most, for we have read, you know, of a certain poor widow, who only gave two mites, and yet the Highest Authority informs us that she gave more than they all."

There were no pews in the Temple, or that proud Pharisee would have had a grand pagoda, from which,

under the pretence of prayer, he might have made an oration upon his own merits, and have looked with disdain upon the publican, standing afar off in the corner, and despising himself, while God's angels were shouting for joy, "Saved! saved!"

You know how our Divine Master denounced this craving for precedence, this self-exaltation, which seemed to say, "Stand by, I am better than thou," and bade His disciples, again and again, to beware of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees, who loved to occupy the chief seats in the synagogues. "Learn of Me," He said, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." And when they came unto Him, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child unto Him and set him in their midst, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

And may we not be sure of this, that if His sweet gentle spirit was so moved with indignation when He found in the Temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting (though it might not have seemed a great sin to sell in the Temple that which was to be offered in the Temple), that He drove them out and forbade them to make His Father's House a house of merchandise, much more would He have denounced the buying and selling, in allotments, of the Holy Place of the Most High itself; and that He, who declared that His House should be called the House of Prayer for all people,

would indeed have been troubled in spirit to see it not so much a House of Prayer but of preaching, and this to those only who had paid for sittings? What would He have said of sales by public auction, not uncommon in America, and, alas! not unknown in England, of the best pews to the highest bidder? Search the Scriptures, and then tell me how shall a man who preaches to those only who have paid to hear him—how shall he declare to them the whole counsel of God? “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” How shall he pass on to the New Testament, and preach from such verses as these: “Go and show John” that he may be assured that I am He, the promised Saviour; that “the poor have the Gospel preached to them”? How shall he stand at the lectern, and read to you working men the words which St. James was inspired to speak: “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect unto him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts”?

There is no element of exclusion in the religion of

Christ. Under the Old Covenant, men were warned not to "limit the Holy One of Israel;" and by the Divine Example, and all the precepts of the New, we are forbidden to make His love too narrow, with false limits of our own, not to magnify His strictness with a zeal He will not own.

Exclusion! There was none so vile, none so poor, none so degraded, but the Master loved him. He never turned from the sightless eyeballs, the foul sores of the leper, the raving of the lunatic. He did not draw His long robe around Him, and hurry on with dignified contempt, when He met the harlot in the streets; but when He was risen He appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom He had cast seven devils. He came to seek and to save that which was lost; and all were lost—

"For all the souls that were were forfeit once;
And He who might the vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy."

And still that gentle Voice, which spake as never man spake, is whispering to all, "weary of earth and laden with their sins:" "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Exclusion! St. Paul seems to condense the essence of Christianity into two little words, "Not I." Not I, because the Spirit of Christ has shown me myself—how much there is to distrust and despise! "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For

the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." "Not I," because I have received this command from Heaven: "Let each esteem other better than himself, in honour preferring one another," because every one of us, who searches his own heart, knows more evil of himself than of his neighbour, and because none of us can say of the worst whom we know, "Had I been in his circumstances I should have been a better man than he." And what grand words those are which came from the loving Christ-like heart of the Apostle, when, in the hour of his victory, when he had fought the good fight of faith, when perfect love had at last cast out fear, and he could say, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day ;," what beautiful brotherly words those were which he added, "and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing"! Yes, that is Christianity; not anxious about ourselves only, wondering "shall I be saved?" and satisfied with the hope; much less speaking great swelling words of vanity as to our assured salvation, but rejoicing to think that not only for ourselves, for those nearest and dearest to us, but for all, there is the same possibility and promise—

"There is plentiful redemption
In the Blood that has been shed,
There is joy for all the members
In the sorrows of the Head."

Without Christianity, men's lives, be their professions, their refinements, and amenities what they

may, can be but selfishness. The man who lives for money, or power, or pleasure, has for his motto "Me only." He does not say it, but he lives it. "Let him take who has the power, and let him keep who can." He pays his rates and taxes (or the law would make him), and as for the rest—"Me only." And in those churches from which the poor are excluded, because they cannot pay for a place, might not these words be painted on the door of every pew, "Me only" ?

Incalculable harm has been done to the Church of England by the gentleman in the loose box. There was a time when we were satisfied, or pretty nearly satisfied, with one form of Christianity in this land. I suppose that now we have got over two hundred. There are even families of which the members cannot make up their minds to go to the same place of worship. One prefers Church, the other Chapel—one sister is High, and another is Low, or Broad ; and that impudent young brother, only too glad of an excuse for evading his duty, takes out his pipe and his *Sporting Times*, and says, "When you've settled it among yourselves, which of your religions is best, you can call again upon yours truly !"

But, in all solemn earnest, it is sad to see this disunion among the disciples of a Master who prayed, and is praying, that we might all be one. Whatever may be the advantages of criticism, and debates, and freedom of opinion, we must all feel in our hearts "how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity ;" and I am fully persuaded, in my own

mind, that one main cause of our unhappy divisions has been the Pew System, and that we cannot expect that God, who maketh men to be of one mind in a house, will grant us reconciliation and reunion, until that house is free and open to all His people.

When the Pew System was developed, it was easy to see that the weak must go to the wall, to the door, and out of it. That fact alone would always keep me from uttering bitter words in disparagement of the Nonconformists—the conviction that they would never have emigrated had they been kindly treated at home; and there can hardly be any greater unkindness in parents than to regard with a chill indifference the weakly ones, who most need their care and protection. To be neglected by those from whom you have a right to expect support and sympathy is indeed an intolerable justice, and if men are repelled where they expect a welcome, they do not repeat the visit.* The results have been deplorable indeed. Hardly a week passes that, as a known advocate of freedom of worship, I do not receive a pressing appeal from some brother, “Come over and help me to do battle against the Pew System.” Let me quote from one of these letters, written by the vicar of the principal church in a

* “Nothing is so hard to bear as injustice, and those who are excluded—as by this system the great majority must be—feel that they are treated with unfairness, though they do not speak out, and that feeling tends to alienate them from the Church and from her ministers.”—Sermon by the Bishop of Chichester, “The House of God the Home and Portion of His People” (1883).

large city : " My church, like most of the forty city churches, was originally served by monks, and was left at the Reformation without any endowment. To provide funds, seat-payments have long been adopted ; and as the church is a grand one, we pay our way. But of our population of two thousand, half, being poor, have been turned away. There is not even a fair proportion of free seats. The working people, if they wish to attend, are placed in the unlet seats (the worst), and the natural result is they do not attend. The Church in my parish, and I believe throughout the city, is not popular among the masses—not loved, scarcely even respected—and one cannot wonder at it. I am certain that mission-work is not hopeless here, but I quite see that hard work has to be done, if we are to recover what we have lost." I confidently look forward to such a recovery, and one main source and stay of my confidence is this, that all unprejudiced persons, all who care to ascertain facts for themselves, may readily be convinced that the Church of England, however she may have been misrepresented by some of her officers, is utterly opposed in all her laws and principles to partiality or exclusion. Like the God whom she worships, " she is no respecter of persons." From the beginning to the end of her Prayer-book, in all her rubrics, canons, and articles, there is no recognition of superiority of one over another of her children. She speaks of the Queen of England as " this woman, Thy servant." She receives the child of the peer

and of the peasant with the same service, and teaches them the same lessons from Baptism to Burial.

“ Our mother the Church hath never a son
To honour before the rest ;
But she singeth the same for mighty kings
And the veriest babe at her breast.
And the bishop goes down to his narrow bed
As the ploughman’s child is laid ;
And alike she blesses the dark-brow’d serf,
And the chief in his robe arrayed.”

And if this principle of equality were enforced by the Church, how it might add to our temporal as to our eternal happiness, by bringing together those classes who are more or less disaffected, jealous, suspicious, towards each another !

We are surrounded in these days by Societies, Fraternities, Orders, Unions, Leagues, and the like ; and I believe that they are capable, under wise administration, of conferring great benefits. I have been a Mason for half a century ; I have the highest regard for the Odd Fellows’ Lodges and other benefit societies ; I think that Trades Unions have wise and righteous intentions ; but I am quite sure that the only society which can secure for us a true and lasting brotherhood, which will repay all our investments a thousandfold, is the society which was formed by Jesus of Nazareth, nigh upon nineteen hundred years ago, and of which the first great officers were ordinary working men. It is a society which has no ballot for members and no entrance fee. To all it is Free and Open !

The world has a great deal to say to us about

Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality; but there is a deal of electro-plate and sham and shoddy in the articles so designated. The plating soon wears off, and, lo! there is nothing but dingy pewter beneath. The indelible family marking-ink and the warranted fast colours disappear in the second wash! What liberty has the man who is the slave of his temper or of his lust—who is always wondering what will folks say, and is miserable if they don't think as he thinks?

Liberty! It means a conscience void of offence toward God and man. It means the glorious liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free from the bondage of sin and doubt, and from the fear of death.

Fraternity! The schemes of mere human wisdom for an eternal armistice and an universal peace—have they saved us a bandage or a bit of diachylon? Have they stopped the firing of a single shell? And the professions of brotherhood, the vows of eternal friendship which we make with those who can minister to our pleasure or our purse—how long do they last? What becomes of him, who is “a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny,” when the feast is over, and sickness or sorrow comes? Ah, me! when we want to borrow, how brotherly we are to those that can lend! when we desire a holiday, how amiably disposed we feel to those who can do our work or kindly take care of the baby! and how fond we are, when we would take a journey, of the man who has a horse and trap! What I mean is this;

that in all associations and amities, of the earth earthy, there will be selfishness as a chief motive (why not?); there will be uncertainty, change, disappointment, failure, and, finally, as with all things human, decay, and then dissolution.

Then as to Equality. I don't believe in a communism of property, though the first Christians were compelled to adopt it, because it is simply impossible. If we all started with exactly the same amount of land or goods to-morrow, in a few months Luke Sharp or Will Strong would have purchased or seized upon Tom Noddy's garden; and Lazy Jack, and Gambling Joe, and Thirsty Dick would be borrowing from Frugal Jim. But in spiritual possessions there is, and must be, equality. Christianity, like the light, like the air, like the magnificence and beauty of Creation, is for all alike; and where should this be taught as a law, and exhibited as a practice, so unreservedly as in our Father's House, where we have all been Baptized by One Spirit into one Body, and where there is no difference, for all have sinned, but the same Lord, rich unto all that call upon Him?

Now as to the objections. The strangest and the silliest seems to me to be this, that we shall have disorderly crowds struggling for places. This sounds to me very much as if some market gardener were to say, "If I let more light and air into my orchard, I shall have such a crop of apples that I shan't know what to do with them." Disorderly crowds! I have

seen the crowds, thank God, again and again, but I never saw them disorderly; and if they were a little over-anxious, I should still regard a multitude of my brothers and sisters assembling for worship as one of the happiest, most impressive spectacles which human eye can see! Then some say, "You don't know who will be your nearest neighbour; it may be some one unpleasant and unclean." Really some of these people who cry, "Come not between the wind and my nobility," seem to imagine that working men can't be happy without a certain amount of tar, oil, coal-dust, or lamp-black—that they never saw a towel, and don't believe in a pump! I should like to take them to certain churches, in which I could show them hundreds of working men, as well washed, brushed, and dressed (though not so expensively) as themselves, quite as considerate and courteous to each other, and quite as devout and reverent in the worship of their God. Then it is asked, "Why disturb existing arrangements, which have continued so long and so peacefully?" "Allow me to inform you," it has been said, "that everybody appears to be satisfied. The people pay their pew-rents cheerfully, and there are more candidates for sittings than there are sittings to let. Why alter that which all approve?" "Might I suggest," I answer, "that tranquillity sometimes indicates mortification, and that the bright green surface of a stagnant pool hides ugly things below? The question is, not what best pleases you and your richer folks, but whether

you are doing your Master's work as He would have you do it?"

"There is no other way," it is sometimes affirmed, "of maintaining a ministry and paying the expenses of a church." But this can only mean that no other method has been tried, for there is another way, and it is the way of the Bible, and it is the way of the Church, namely, that, on the first day of the week, every one of us should lay by us in store, as God has prospered us—our alms in the Offertory. I have not heard of an instance in which such a change has failed. Many years ago I tried it with regard to church-rates, and whereas, under the compulsory system, we hardly raised £30 per annum, under the voluntary we contributed thrice that amount; and I don't believe there was a poor man in the congregation who did not give cheerfully and generously according to his means. But here again the question is, not what will pay the best, but what is right or wrong. And let me add that this Pew System does not prove to be a commercial, a pecuniary success. It has been nowhere tried so extensively as in America, and Mr. Talmage, an American preacher, gives us this report of the results. "Some speak," he says, "as though the present mode, the buying and selling of pews, were a success. Far from it. Three-fourths of the churches of Christ in this land are in debt, and in three-fourths of them the income does not equal the outgo; and at the end of the year a few generous men have to come together and make

up the deficit, or some general effort is made on the part of the congregation to regulate the indebtedness."

And now we come to the question, How shall this righteous claim of every parishioner to a seat in his parish church be asserted, and how the restoration be made? We must not put a stumbling-block in a brother's way as that man did, who, going into a church monopolized by pew-holders, walked up and down the central aisle, without an invitation to enter (though there were plenty of vacant places, but the proprietors were absorbed in their devotions at the moment when he passed), and then, leaving the edifice, shortly reappeared with a borrowed chair, and, placing it just in front of the pulpit, remained there during the service, the most distinguished member of the congregation. A more suggestive and feasible protest was made in my own immediate neighbourhood, and by one of my friends. During some alterations in the chancel, which usually sufficed for the worshippers, the church being a very large one (in fact, it is now a cathedral), chairs were placed in the nave, which was declared to be free and open. Very soon the spirit of the pew system which had prevailed in the chancel began to show itself outside. Some of the common chairs in the best places for hearing and seeing disappeared, and were replaced by comfortable seats with arms and cushions. My friend, who thinks with you and me that "all equal are within the Church's gate," resolved to resist this

selfishness, so he and his family, and a few congenial friends, went early to the services and preoccupied these seats made easy. The owners came, stared, looked silly—for “conscience doth make cowards of us all”—and after a time the armchairs disappeared. My brothers, this principle, being right and just, might be carried out to a much more extensive and remarkable demonstration. Every parishioner might occupy a place in his parish church—even in the “loose box”—but this movement might lead to collision, and we, as Christians, having as much as lieth in us to live peaceably with all men, are fighting our battle with weapons far more powerful in the end than physical or even pecuniary power, for “thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just.” We believe that our cause has Divine approbation, and so,

“If angels fight,
Weak men must fall; for Heaven defends the right.”

Now bear with me, I pray you, while, in conclusion, I notice one more criticism which has been expressed upon our enterprise by those who doubt its success. “If,” it has been said, “by making the churches free and open, you expect at once to fill them with working men, you are very much mistaken indeed. We can tell you of several instances in which the Pew System has been abolished without increasing the number of the worshippers.” I will not dwell, in reply, upon the fact that the neglect of a century is not to be repaired in a twelvemonth, and that those who have been first starved, and then turned

out-of-doors, are inclined to doubt offers of hospitality ; but I will at once declare that we do not place our entire dependence upon free and open churches for the reunion of the classes in public worship, although we believe them to be a primary and inseparable preparation. We are not quite so sanguine as to suppose that a public dining-room would be much used by working people, in which, though it was always free and open, the food was only available when they were most busy at their work, or if it were badly cooked, or a little too high, or a little too tough for due mastication, and therefore very difficult inwardly to digest. What is this but the stork asking the fox to dine from a tall vase which he couldn't reach, and the fox returning the compliment with a large shallow dish of soup ? We must not only have churches free and open for working men, and all men, but services at such times as shall suit the convenience of all ; and not only such services as those we have now in our ancient and beautiful Liturgies, which I trust will ever be appreciated by those who have long loved and understood them, but such other services as every one who uses may follow and join in at once—clear and impressive prayers, such as all can pray, and hymns which compel a man to sing.

Then as to sermons. Well, with all regard and respect for my reverend brothers, I do think that sermons might, as a rule, be a little more interesting. I blame chiefly the entire absence at our Universities

of any school of elocution—any endeavour to teach the art of preaching—but I am convinced, at the same time, that much more might be done by the preachers themselves. I have been told that a man, said to be of unsound mind, attends a church in one of our great cities, and that when the curate, who preaches briefly and impressively, is in the pulpit, he listens with unflagging attention; but when the vicar begins to read a long and dreary discourse, he takes off his boots and puts them outside the pew, to intimate that he is probably there for the night, and wishes to have them cleaned.

“If he be mad, as I believe he is,
His madness hath the oddest frame of sense,”

as Polonius says of Hamlet, “Though this be madness, yet there is method in it;” for we cannot close our eyes to the fact (unless we are asleep with the rest of the congregation) that, not unfrequently, if it were not a church, the most appropriate air which the organist could play would be, “We’re a’ noddin’!”

X.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

“Ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”—1 TIM. vi. 18, 19.

No one can know so well as the parish priest, whose duty it is to visit the sick, to be the friend who loveth at all times, and the brother born for adversity, the good which is done by such a society as this.* When he goes to the home of some poor sufferer, whom sudden sickness, or one of those many accidents to which we are hourly exposed, or the infirmities of natural decay, have laid upon his bed, so that he can no more go forth to his work and to his labour until the evening, one of the first questions which a clergyman asks is this—Does this man belong to any Lodge, or other like association, which provides relief for him in the time of need?

And how much depends upon the answer! If he has taken the wise man's advice, “Though a man live many years, and rejoice in them all, yet let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be

* Preached to a Provident Institution.

many ;" if he has prudently joined such a brotherhood as yours, he can send at once for the medical officer of your institution, and make his righteous claim for the allowance, which is due to those who really require it. Now he knows the meaning of that noble word, which you have chosen as the first title of your Order, "Independent."

He asks nothing from you ; he wants nothing from me ; he simply demands his own. He has not to quest about for some artifice by which, disabled from earning his weekly wages, he may supply his wants. He has not to endure the pain and the shame of supplicating for a gift or a loan. When he asks in his calamity, "What shall I do ? I cannot dig ; to beg I am ashamed," he is not tempted to dishonesty or deceit. In the sunshine of his health and his strength, he foresaw the night in which no man can work, and, now that its shadows deepen on his path, he is not without oil in his lamp.

But he who has made no such provision—who, like the poor prodigal, has spent all on self—he, when the sure days of famine come, and he begins to be in want, is indeed forlorn and wretched. On him has come the fulfilment of that prophecy, which he heard oft, but would not heed, "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourself about with sparks"—the fire of burning passions, the lurid flames of anger and of lust, the sparks that gleam and die, of worldly foolishness and pride—"walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled—this

ye shall have of Mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."

Alas! with a double sorrow—the sorrow of his bodily suffering, and the keen distress of his mind. He must exist upon a parish pittance, hardly enough to supply him with the necessities of life, when he needs, it may be, a generous and more costly diet. He must crave the uncertain and unwilling help of his neighbours, and submit to their criticisms and contempt. He may be constrained to part with some of those possessions which for years have ornamented and brightened his home, even with those which minister to his daily need and comfort—his furniture, his clothes. Nay, he may have to leave the home itself, the home of his childhood, and the friends of his manhood, to die among strangers in the work-house.

There can be no question, then, that it is the interest of every man, whose means of support are derived from his own exertions, to make provision, to lay up in store for himself a good foundation against the time to come, when he can no longer make those exertions; and it is the duty of those whose means are more abundant, or who have the power of advising and influencing others, to encourage and promote, by every effort they can make, the manly, wise, and honourable intentions of such societies as this. And it is a sight which makes the heart glad, to see in this church to-day so many, who, having weighed this matter, and being fully persuaded in their own minds,

have come to a brave and right determination ; and we rejoice in happy thoughts of the future—of comfort, when comfort is needed most ; of relief, of which no ratepayer can complain, which even the most niggardly cannot grudge, which brings no blush of shame to the cheeks of him who receives it. He has most help, most sympathy, human and Divine, who helps himself, and in the days of dearth he shall have enough.

But we are here to-day in God's house, my brothers ; I might call you brothers, as having been for more than forty years a member of that ancient Society of Freemasons, which has been, as it were, the parent and model of your Order ; but I speak to you to-day as your brother in the great family of our Father which is in heaven, here in our Father's house ; of that family in which both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all one, for which cause He, even our Lord Jesus Christ, is not ashamed to call us brethren ; " I ascend," He said, " to My Father and your Father," being " the Firstborn of many brethren ;" we are here to-day, because the wisdom of those who made the laws and established the customs of your Society looked far beyond the plain, simple truths of economy and forethought of which I have just spoken. It was good, they knew, to provide for sickness and old age ; it was wise, in the summer-tide and autumn of life, to store the corn and the fruit for winter's food ; it was brave and decorous to look death itself in the face, and to ensure for

the mourners wherewithal to bury their dead. But there was something more than this. Reason, instinct, mere selfishness, suggested forethought for the future. The animals knew it—the bee, the ant, the beaver, and a thousand others. But there was the *soul*, the breath, which God had breathed into man's nostrils of everlasting life.

These bodies of ours, it was good and wise to make provision for them, because at any hour, however strong and healthful now, they may be throbbing with pain, or sick unto death. There is no safeguard, there is no exception.

I passed by a great house in London at night; it glowed with light; a long line of carriages filled the street—

“And tapers gleamed, and music breathed,
And beauty led the ball.”

I passed it again a few days afterwards, and that street was thickly carpeted with straw; and then, by a striking coincidence, I went by once more, and the blinds were down, and all was hushed in the silence of sorrow, and in the awful presence of death, and there was a line of carriages, in mournful contrast with that which I had seen before—for at the head of all was the hearse.

It is good to lay in store for these bodily needs, because they may come to-night. The shadow of death rests always on the pathway of life, whether that life be upon the mountains or in the valleys of the world, whether it be in palace or cottage, factory

or field, down in dark mines or out on glittering seas. It is the shadow of God's wrath, which fell upon the sunshine of His love, when man, a free agent, marred His work by disobedience, and brought death into the world with all our woes. It rests upon the dim dawn of wailing infancy, upon the bright, happy morn of boyhood, upon the hot noon of passionate youth, on the toilsome, anxious hours of manhood, and the calm eventide of age. But no man knows when that shadow will turn into reality—life to death.

“Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set ;—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, O Death !
We know when moons shall wane,
When summer-birds from far shall cross the sea,
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain ;
But who shall teach us when to look for thee ?”

Yes, our astronomers can tell us to the minute when the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, “yet doth the eclipse of sorrow and of death come unforewarned.” “Man,” says Solomon, “knoweth not his time.” Of the infant born to-day, who can tell whether it will live to boyhood or girlhood, manhood, womanhood, old age ? A little child came to his mother and said, “Mother, do you think that, if I were to die to-night, I should be with Jesus and the angels ?” And the mother answered, “Oh, my darling, your little life is only just begun ; how can you think and talk of death ?” Then the child said, “But, mother, when

we were walking the other day in the streets, I saw, through a window, two coffins which were less than I am; and so I may die at any time." Who hears me now, and has not some unexpected death fresh in his memory? Who can walk through a cemetery without noting that to every period of life the message is sent, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee"?

No man knows *when* or *how*. The manner is as uncertain as the hour. One man dies, like the author of the "Concordance," on his knees in prayer; another, like Zimri and Cozbi, in the very act of deadly sin. One on some Alpine summit, another drowned in the deep. One a death of violence, by the knife of the assassin, in battle, in a burning theatre; another so peacefully, so gradually, that you know not when the spirit leaves, and the mirror is put to the cold lips to see if there be breath left in him. One man dies far away, in a foreign land, among strangers; and another where he has lived his life, with loving faces gathered round his bed.

We try to ignore the inevitable, to forget this uncertainty, like children singing in the dark, that they may not think about their fears. "All men think all men mortal but themselves." We make the exception the rule, and say, because some are so strong that they come to fourscore years, that we are sure to do so. When the young, or the middle-aged, and especially when persons of our own age, die, we think, or try to think, that there is no similarity between their

case and ours. We do not like to be reminded that, perhaps only a few weeks ago, they were as confident as we are now that, though a thousand should fall beside them, and ten thousand at their right hand, death would not come nigh them. How ready we are with our excuses, how quick with our explanations! There was some latent constitutional ailment, some family weakness, from which we are exempt; there was some neglect or mistake in the treatment which never should have occurred. We say not now, not yet. We see the pitiful sight of old men and women imitating the appearance, dress, and amusements of the young, trying to hide the signs of age. We hear it said, with a cruelty which thinks it is kind, "Don't tell them of their danger; never even speak of death."

But God, in His mercy, will not let us forget. The signs and sounds of our mortality are ever before our eyes and in our ears. "Change and decay in all around I see." "The air is full of farewells to the dying, and mournings for the dead." Does not the outer world, at this season,* preach to us of death, as we look upon the decay of brightness and beauty—the crushed stubble or the brown earth, where the valleys stood so thick with corn that they seemed to laugh and sing; the "withered bents" and dank herbage, where the meadows were so gay with flowers? As we watch the leaves fluttering down, are we not reminded of Isaiah's words, that "we all do fade as

* Preached in November.

a leaf," and of a time when, stripped of all our adornments, pretences, and concealments, we shall stand naked and exposed to the cold blast of death?

Why, we cannot take up a newspaper which does not contain sermons upon death. Young men and young women, out for a holiday, in strong health and high spirits, shouting and laughing, turning to mirth all things of earth; and a pointsman makes a mistake, or a driver does not see a signal, and some are crushed to death, and some maimed and crippled for life. Twelve hundred children meet for amusement, and by some strange thoughtlessness a door is shut, and nigh upon two hundred are suffocated to death. A sudden squall comes upon the lake, and there is a panic and a rush, and the pleasure-boat upsets, and half, or it may be all, are drowned. Or the lamp is uncovered, and there is an explosion in the mine, and the widows and the orphan children are wailing at the mouth of the pit. You can hardly take up a newspaper but you see "Fatal Accidents," "Awfully Sudden Deaths," from hemorrhage, from apoplexy, from disease of the heart. Are not these sermons a thousand times more impressive than we preachers know how to preach? How they thunder God's warnings in our ears! "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt surely die;" "Ye know not what shall be on the morrow."

Forewarned of these fearful contingencies, and wisely endeavouring to be prepared for them, with such means of maintenance and relief as you would

otherwise be unable to secure, you are brought face to face with death, and are led from time to time to ask, What is it? what change will it make?

There are some who would have you believe that it is an end, an annihilation. To me it seems that such a belief (if it exist) must be the wish rather than the conviction of one who has nothing to hope, but everything to fear, in the future—

“ Whose eye no more looks onward, but its gaze
Rests where remorse a misspent life surveys.
By the dark form of what he is, serene,
Stands the bright ghost of what he might have been,
There the vast loss, and there the worthless gain ;
Vice scorned yet wooed, and virtue loved in vain.”

Annihilation! I have seen hundreds die, but I never heard one speak as though death were an end of life. “I shall not be long *here*,” they say. “I feel that I am going. I shall soon be with those I have lost.” Were there no revelation, reason, instinct, philosophy, would teach us, as they have taught all earnest thinkers in all times, that nature never gravitates to nought. I see already, on tree and shrub, the first formations of new growth, the germs and buds. The very leaves which are fallen will turn to mould, and so become the source of their own reproduction and continuance. And so, in all that withered dryness and decay, we find the seed in abundance which is to perpetuate life. And what teaching is there in the seed itself—how God brings new growth and beauty out of that which seems to be dead! Why, I have seen, as some of you have

seen, a fragment just cut from a small dry seed, which seemed dry and dead, put into a powerful microscope, and on the application of water the little white rootlets began to shoot from it. Seeds which have lain dormant for more than a thousand years will grow when sown in the soil. And think you that it will be a hard task for Him who made man from the dust of the earth to remake him from the dust of the grave? Wherefore Paul writes, "But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: . . . but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him." Wherefore a greater than Paul, his Lord and our Lord, has said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Annihilation! Those great and good philosophers who had no revelation, but who sought humbly to know the truth—and not having the law, were a law unto themselves—had a sure faith in the immortality of the soul. One of the wisest of these, Socrates, has said that the great study of his life had been how to prepare for death. To the sensual, to the idle, and to the unjust, death seemed then as now to be "terrible," "dreadful," and dark, and "hopeless;" but to those who loved justice and kindness it brought little fear. They saw *here* the issues of truth and falsehood, cruelty and benevolence, labour and indolence, lust and love, and they regarded these as intimations o

the *hereafter*; and they believed in future reward and punishment, in dismal Tartarus and bright Elysian fields. God's faithful people, under the older covenant, knew from prophecy and type of the Resurrection, and looked for Paradise regained; but it was reserved for the Son of God Incarnate, not only in the history of the rich man and Lazarus, and by the promise, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," but by His visit to the regions of the departed, when He went and preached to the spirits in prison, to dispel all doubt, and to assure us that every soul of man, when the house of this tabernacle is dissolved, goes at once into a place of joy or of sorrow, and there waits the judgment. And so—

"There is no death! What seems so is transition :
This life of mortal breath
Is but the suburbs of those fields Elysian,
Whose portals we call death ;"

or the suburbs, it may be, of that city, filthy and polluted, over whose gates is inscribed, "Whoso entereth here, leaves hope behind."

The founders of your Order, believing this as Christian men, originated the devout custom, which you keep to-day, of walking hand in hand to the house of God as friends—friends not only for time but for eternity—that you might thank Him for His mercies past, and pray for His lovingkindness hereafter, confess your sins and receive His message of forgiveness, join together in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, hear His most Holy Word, and

suffer the word of exhortation also from us His ministers.

Permit me, then, in all earnestness and brotherly love, briefly to bring before you certain Christian graces which are suggested to you by the principles of your Order, so that your Lodge may prove a blessing, not only to your body, but to your soul ; so that you may lay up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, not only in this world, but in that which shall be hereafter ; so that you shall not only in the day of necessity have enough, but in the perilous time, in the hour of death and in the day of judgment, you shall not be confounded ; so that when this voice which speaks to you is silenced, and the ears with which you listen shall not hear though a battle of artillery were fought above your grave, the soul within us, that from which I speak and with which you hear, shall be in joy and felicity, having laid hold of eternal life.

1. Your society teaches *self-denial*. It is very easy to say that all men should save for the time of sickness ; it is especially easy for those who can have no fear of want, and who will have property to bequeath, to preach to the poor from St. Paul's text, "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel," but it is no easy matter in practice to lay by in store against the time to come. The amount of subscription may in itself be small, but there are times when it requires a good resolution

to make the payment regularly; times when work is scarce and wages are small, when the poor are very poor, or are tempted to lay out their money elsewhere.

Need I tell you, as Christian men, that self-denial is a condition of our salvation? Our dear Lord never spake plainer words than these, "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself." That we should make God's will our will, first praying to Him, "Thy will be done," and then striving by His grace to do it,—for this is the supreme rule of the gospel, and the only road to that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. And this rule cannot be followed, this road cannot be trod, without self-denial, without doing things which the natural man dislikes. No man is dying to sin and living with Christ in righteousness who is not conscious of a continual struggle between his spiritual and carnal self; who does not oft sigh with St. Paul, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" No man loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity who is not daily endeavouring to do something which his *baser* self would rather not do, because his *better* self bids him do it; who does not do kind acts from time to time because his Saviour went about doing good, and one day, before men and angels, will summon

those to His glory who have done works of mercy ; who does not speak kind words, and take heed that he offend not with his tongue, because his Judge has warned him, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

And so this self-denial for the body's sake shall teach you self-denial for your soul ; and as you lay by for the time of sickness and decay, you will think of the Apostle's bidding, "Upon the first day of the week let every man lay by in store as God hath prospered him," for the poorer brethren, for the work of the ministry, for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. And specially this afternoon I would bid you who are here in health and strength, surrounded by your friends, to give generously to those poor sick folks who lie in weariness and pain, far away from those nearest and dearest to them. The diary of our life is "ruled for accounts," and in it is entered so much for self and so much given to God ; and our Lord has Himself told us that what we do for His sake to the sick we have done unto Him—"I was sick, and ye visited Me." The time will soon be here when all the funds of the Manchester Unity could not buy you one moment of life, nor bring you one thought of peace, but when the memory of good deeds done for Christ and His poor shall be as music in the soul ; when all that has been spent upon selfishness shall be lost, but all that has been given to others from Christian charity shall be safe in the treasury of God. Is it not written, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor

and needy : the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. The Lord comfort him when he lieth sick upon his bed : make Thou all his bed in his sickness"? "Never do I remember to have read," writes St. Jerome, "that he died an unhappy death who had freely done works of mercy."

I see that one of your Lodges has the beautiful title of "The Good Samaritan." Let us all be good Samaritans to-day. Don't let us pass by the sick and the suffering like the priest and Levite, but do what we can to give ease and comfort. There is many a poor man and woman in the wayside cottage that can't afford to pay for the treatment which their case requires ; let us do our best to get them into the hospital, as the Samaritan took the wounded Jew to the inn. Let the collection made in this church to-day be worthy of your Order as a Christian brotherhood. No man ever regretted the following of a generous impulse when he was asked in Christ's name to be generous. It is our extravagance upon self which we rue. "Give, and it shall be given unto you," is God's own promise ; but there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and that meanness tendeth to poverty.

2. Your fellowship, your combination for a common purpose, your frequent intercourse, must evoke fraternal sympathies, and tend towards *brotherly love*. But no mere human associations can teach us this love in its integrity. No man really loves his brother simply because they are members of the same society, walk hand in hand, and meet in the lodge. No simi-

larities of taste or temperament, no reciprocity of advantage, no success of mutual co-operation, can teach true love. You may have counterfeits and imitations. For example, a man will tell a woman whom he would deceive for the gratification of his passion that his lust is love. A man may profess the love of his country, when he is only seeking his own aggrandizement; love for his fellow-men, when he only cares for their influence or applause. Even in the purest and truest of our natural affections there is some taint of selfishness. You cannot find it on earth, but you may bring it from heaven by the presence of the Holy Spirit in your heart, and then, when you love your brother because God loves him and Christ died for him, then it is yours.

Consider, again, that these earthly fraternities are but for a little while.

“Friend after friend departs;
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts
Which hath not here an end.”

Faces are missing to-day which were with you at your last anniversary. The warm hand which you held in yours is cold in the grave to-day. That is a sad entry in your summary of events, “Deaths of eighteen members.” Who goes next? You or I? It matters not, if we belong heart and soul, lip and life, to the One Great Brotherhood, the Sacred Society which was formed by Jesus of Nazareth, whose first officers were working men, and which invites all to join in their

doctrine and fellowship: "Come ye to the waters"—the Baptismal waters—"without money and without price;" a Society in which none are poor, for they have the unsearchable riches of Christ, and treasures in heaven; in which none are weakly, for they are strong in the Lord and in the power of His might; none are forlorn or desolate, for He has said, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you," and Christ dwelleth in their hearts by faith; a Society in which there is no real separation, for those on earth are in communion with those that are at rest—all one in Christ Jesus.

3. Once more, it is impossible to survey a scene like this without thinking of the Psalmist's words, "Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in *unity*!" Our dear Lord's prayer rises to our lips, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one." Surely there is nothing on earth so like that which we hope to hear in heaven as this united worship, when the voices of a great congregation "the strain upraise of joy and praise" to the Eternal Trinity. Alas! my brothers, it makes one sigh to think, in this peaceful haven, how the waves and storms of discord surge and roar without. Wars and rumours of wars, nations boasting of their civilization, and professing their desire for peace, multiplying their fleets and armies, ever designing means more and more terrible for destroying one another. Oh—

“ Were half the power which fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals nor forts.”

And then, in cities, towns, and villages, how much disunion—social, political, ay, religious, disunion. The pride of station, the pride of riches, holding itself aloof from him whom God has placed in a lower position, or in poorer circumstances, or to whom He has given no special gifts of mental ability, or fewer opportunities of education, designing him for duties which did not require them. Political disunion! Two men who have been playmates in childhood, school-fellows, friends in youth and manhood, cutting each other in the street because they have taken different sides at an election. Religious disunion! Members of the same family parting at the door of their home on Sunday, and going to different places of worship.

And what is the cause? St. James was inspired to tell us. “From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence even of your lusts?” We are disunited because, despite Christ’s At-one-ment, we are not at one, not in union with God. As members of Christ, we are as limbs stricken with paralysis; we do not obey the head. We are not in union with our own selves. I mean our own truer, nobler self—our reason, our conscience, our spiritual instincts. We are not as he who, really striving for the mastery, is temperate in all things. We think, like some foolish athlete, we can win the race without training. We speak before we think. We act upon

impulse. We let our passions overpower our principles. We are provoked by trifles, deceived by shams, and satisfied with silly excuses.

What is the cure? First of all, of course, to begin with self—to inspect, and try to improve ourselves, imploring our Father, for Christ's sake, to send the Holy Spirit to help us. "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace." But there must be a battle to win, and always discipline and armed defence to preserve that peace.

And when we find how hard it is to live in conformity with that spiritual self, then at once we shall begin to be more tolerant, more pitiful, more kind, to others. "If thou canst not make thyself such an one as thou wouldest, how shalt thou expect another to be exactly to thy mind?" No; Christ in your heart will bring Christ to your home, and your friends and your neighbours also will take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. Your union with Him will unite you more and more with those for whom He died—and *He died for all*. You will, with something of the mind which was in Christ Jesus, begin to be the advocate and not the accuser of the brethren. Instead of saying, "Fie on thee, fie on thee! we saw it with our eyes. There, there, we would have it. Now that he lieth down, let him rise up no more,"—"God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are,"—we shall sigh, "Alas! my brother; Christ pity thee and me." We shall try to see and to encourage that which is good—and

there is something good in all—ever remembering those beautiful words of the Apostle, “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice : and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

And so, my brothers, walking hand in hand up the steep road of duty—your duty to your neighbour and your God—like those whom Christ called, and sent forth two and two—following the same sure Guide, and serving the same kind Master, you brethren of the Independent Order of Oddfellows of the Manchester Unity shall realize the only true independence, the glorious liberty of the children of God—liberty from the worst of all slaveries, the service of the devil and the dread of death ; you shall know the only true fellowship, the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship—“and truly,” said he whom Christ loved the most, “our fellowship is with the Father and the Son ;” and you shall be joined together in the unity which nothing can divide—the unity of the Spirit. Thus, “ready to distribute, willing to communicate, you shall lay up for yourselves in store a good foundation for the time to come, you shall lay hold on eternal life.”

XI.

HOME RULE.

“Learn first to show piety at home.”—1 TIM. v. 4.

WE have heard a great deal in the political world about Home Rule, but this is no place for politics; this is a place for peace, not for contention; this is a place for “fixing our thoughts on things above, not on things of the earth;” and I am not going to regard these two words politically, or to consider whether Ireland would be the better, or England the worse, under a different form of government. But what I am anxious for, and what I pray for, is this—that I may connect these two words which you hear so often with some higher lesson, some spiritual thoughts, some consideration of your responsibilities, of your possibilities, of your dangers, concerning Christian Home Rule.

What sort of Home Rule is yours and mine? Could it be said of us as it was said of Abraham, who was called the “friend of God”—“I know him, that he will teach his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord”? Could it

be written over your door and mine those words of Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"? Could you and I say with the "man after God's own heart," "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart"? Could it be said of you and me, as it was of that noble man, for whom Christ worked a miracle, "The man believed and his whole house"? Could it be said of your home and mine as it was of the man Cornelius, that "he and his house believed, and gave much alms to the people, and feared God"? Could it be said of your home and mine as it was of Zacchæus, "This day is salvation come to thine house"?

And if Christ came now to your home and mine, and lifted up His blessed hand, and said, "Peace be to this house," would He enter and find peace? No other rule is precious without this Home Rule. A man may have vast power and dominion and authority, and be a good ruler in one sense but a bad man in another, unless he knows how to rule his own heart. As St. Paul said, "If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed." The priests and the rulers derided the blessed Saviour, and sought to lay hands upon Him. There may be spiritual wickedness in high places; there may be spiritual wickedness in your heart and mine; and so long as a man does not rule his own heart and his own soul, he never can be a great ruler over others. He may have some success,

he may have adulation, a great show of service, but unless a man is his own master he cannot be for long a master of others.

Now, the first great principle of this Home Rule is self-rule, self-government, self-command. First of all we must know what we have got to command; we must know who are our friends and who are our enemies in this little kingdom of our own souls and hearts. Therefore the first great duty we have to perform is to get a knowledge of self; self-examination.

This was the conclusion of the old philosophers, that the great work of man was to know himself; to know what was good in him and what was bad, and to try to promote the good and expel the bad. A man must first know what he had got to rule in himself, before he could begin to rule others. Men must know themselves, and then their friends and their enemies. Just as a king may have in his court some who hate his rule, some it may be who are anarchists, nihilists, some who would gladly rebel against him, and some perhaps who are greater enemies to him still, those who will flatter him to his face, but yet who are false friends, and who would leave him in adversity; so you and I have enemies, who tell us that they are our best friends, and yet would persuade us that religion would only make us dull and dreary.

Man's great enemy from the first has been disobedience, rebellion against authority—Divine, parental, the authority of teachers and masters; the proud idea

that he could do better for himself than those above him who loved him most dearly; the covetous longing for something which he had not—the one tree of which he might not eat; his passions, the “carnal lusts that war against the soul,” idleness, tempting him to forget that God sent every man into the world for a purpose, to do something not only for his own soul but for his fellow-man.

The working man has a right to say, “What is that man doing; what is he doing for the good of the people? I have to work hard; what is he doing?” God would have every man work; He would have no drones in His hive. What could be said of a man whose great desire in life was only to feed and sleep? “A beast, and no more,” said the great poet. God never gave to man such capacity for work and such wisdom that he should let them rust unused.

These are enemies that must be rooted out; we ourselves let them in, because sin cannot conquer us without our own consent. Every man holds the key of the fortress, and until he throws that key to Satan he cannot enter. Self-examination would bring sorrow, and when they searched they would see what they had lost. God called them to true repentance, and as soon as they repented, then He said, “Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Thus it was for every man who was expelling his foes to rule his own heart. And he would find a

Counsellor waiting for him. Even if they were not Christians, God had given to every man a conscience. St. Paul told the Gentiles this. But the Christian had a Counsellor, even the Holy Spirit, given him in answer to prayer; given him first when he was made a Christian in Holy Baptism. That Spirit might be lost, the light might have gone out, but it would come back in answer to prayer, to help him in ruling his heart—the Divine, God's, Christ's, Home Rule.

See the contrast between God's rule and man's rule, between the converted and the unconverted heart. Have you never noticed on the rail, in coming out of London or elsewhere, looking at the backs of the houses, and the small spaces apportioned to each, in one there was brightness and beauty, and cultivated flowers, but in another were heaps of rubbish, dirt, and disorder? Or going into two houses you have seen the difference between the one, where there was rule and cleanliness and order, the bright ornamentation that made the place so cheerful and homelike, and the other, where there was disorder, the home of the drunkard. It has been exhibited in pictures, but it is in reality far worse than any artist can paint. They saw here no rule, no God, no Christ, no conscience, no Holy Spirit, every man doing that which was right in his own eyes, regardless of his own happiness or that of his neighbour's, and bringing misery to his home. But to him who ordered his conversation

aright, doing his best, doing his duty, what light, what brightness, what warmth there was in his house; he had a foretaste in that home of heaven itself! Men went about thinking that they would find in the indulgence of their passions the gratification which they could not get at home. Who would not be ashamed to speak of the gratifications of lust, and compare them with the joys of home? There was no love in this world like the true love of a Christian husband and wife, a Christian father and mother, the love of a Christian child for its parents, the love of brothers and sisters. The man who ruled himself after the law of God's commandments had happiness and joy in this world and in the next. He was generous in prosperity, and could say in adversity, "Shall I receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall I not receive evil? The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the Name of the Lord."

Let them make the heart right, and let their life be cleansed by the inspiration of the Spirit, and the blood shed upon the Cross, and then they would have Home Rule, home happiness, and joy which would be continued through eternity. Some said as they looked on the pale faces of their beloved in the hour of death, "Oh, I can't bear the thought of losing them." But the Christian said, "I never shall; I shall always have communion, the Communion of Saints, with those that loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and proved their love in their lives. Only

for a little while shall our earthly home be broken up, and then we shall meet, first in Paradise, and then in Heaven; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

XII.

THE FRIENDS OF THE WORKING MAN.

IF the admiration of our fellow-creatures, their sweet smiles of sympathy, their earnest words of praise, their promises of abundant gifts, their solemn benedictions, and their oaths of eternal friendship, can make us happy, there must be times of exquisite and complete felicity in the lives of you working men.

For example, just before an election, "what a piece of work is man!"—that is to say, the working man—"how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving, how express and admirable!" How everybody loves him, and wants to shake hands with him; and when he seems somewhat shy, and looks at the grime on his fingers, and tries to rub it off on his sleeves, assures him that they "like him best in his war-paint," and that they see, in those evidences of honest work,

"The nobility of labour,
The long pedigree of toil!"

Wherever he goes, appeals are made from window and from wall, "Vote for Sir Place-Hunter, the friend of the working man!" "Plump for Windbag, who

loves the working man!" "Poll early for Firebrand, ye down-trodden working men!"

How is it that you do not seem to be flushed with exuberant joy? Is it because your experience suggests that this brilliant demonstration, raising your eyes heavenward, and sending forth showers of gold, ascending like the rocket, will likewise descend as the stick? That in two days after the election the friend of the working man will be gone from his gaze, like one of those beautiful firework stars, and that he will

‘ Feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed ”?

Until, after an interval, back comes Firebrand, the defeated candidate, to do a little more in the “trampling” line; to remind the electors that he had always told them that his opponents were humbugs; that they would never get anything from the old lady at Windsor, or from bloated aristocrats, who, when they weren’t engaged in the Divorce Court, did nothing but gamble and drink outside; that Whigs and Tories meant nothing but office; that landlords and employers were tyrants and thieves, rolling in wealth, only regarding them as slaves and tools, working them to death, and then sending them to the Union (the cemetery seemed more appropriate)—chucking the orange, as Mr. Firebrand beautifully expressed it,

into the swill-tub when they had sucked the juice ; that if they wanted help, they must help themselves—

“ Hereditary bondsmen ! know ye not,
Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow ? ”

Must strike, and keep striking. Stop the engines, smash the machinery, put out the furnaces, blow up the public buildings, despise all offers of compromise or arbitration, and hate everybody except themselves.

My brothers, I don't believe in the ancestral ape, but I note similitudes between men and monkeys. For example, I was admiring, some years ago, the affectionate attachment of two gorillas in one of the cages of the Zoological Gardens, when a keeper said to me, “ You would hardly believe, sir, that those two, no long time since, were always jabbering and fighting.” “ And what,” I asked, “ caused the happy change ? ” “ Well,” he replied, “ there used to be an ugly old baboon along with them, and though, when they were quarrelling most furiously, he would retire into a corner, and assume an expression of disgust and dismay, I always suspected that, somehow or other, he set them on to fight. There was always a large amount of monkey conversation and antics, in which he took a prominent part, before a battle ; but when hostilities commenced, he withdrew. It was as I suspected ; for when I moved that baboon to another cage, those two had only one more bout, the biggest they ever had, and then it seemed to strike them what fools they were, and from that day to this they've been the best of friends.” Just as you and

I, in our school-days, when that long fight was over, regarded our opponent, through our discoloured eye, in a new aspect, and he became our respectful and respected mate.

I left the apes; but, as I sat to rest upon a garden-chair, I thought how many silly monkeys, called men, were always quarrelling, and never would be friends, and though they had lived and would continue to live in the same cage, were continually suspecting, envying, irritating, and assaulting each other, when they might have peace and harmony, and, like the two baboons, in their happy hours of reconciliation, might relieve each other of many disagreeable parasites. It occurred to me that if capital and labour, employers and workmen, landlords and tenants, masters and servants, clergy and laity, would show more mutual regard; if, when dissensions arose between those who were dependent on each other, the possibility could be acknowledged that there might be faults on both sides, instead of the usual bluster, "I am Sir Oracle, and when I speak let no dog bark," instead of contemplating our own virtues through the most powerful of all microscopes, and our neighbour's merits through that most minimizing lens which is known to science, the inverted telescope of self-conceit and self-interest,—why, then we might hope for harmony in lieu of discord, and for confidence instead of suspicion.

Then I thought of that wicked old baboon who made the mischief, and of the peace which ensued

when the two monkeys were left to themselves, and there was no flatterer to say, "You're such a pretty monkey, you ought to have a scarlet coat, and a cocked hat, and a barrel-organ, and not to associate with low and ugly apes;" no bully to suggest, "You're the biggest, hit him in the eye; you're the strongest, take his nuts." And I remembered how much harm was done, outside those gardens, by malignant, restless busybodies, stump-orators, and penny-a-liners, who never did, and never intend to do, a hard day's work, "knowing nothing" (as St. Paul wrote of their predecessors more than eighteen hundred years ago), "but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, and surmisings."

There is no man more odious than he who comes to you and me, and says, "I always thought that you and Bob Smith were such tremendous mates?" And when you make answer, "Yes, we were at school together, and have always been sincere friends," he proceeds to state that "he *must* remark" (there is no *must* about it, except that such sneaks must make mischief) "that he was surprised to hear Smith utter such and such disparagements" (one-half fiction, and the other exaggeration), which inflame you with a desire to punch Robert's countenance—for "to be wroth with those we love doth work like madness in the brain"—and may produce a coolness through life.

I mean the sort of fellow who says to the rich, "Don't you trouble yourself about the poor; if you

give 'em too many beans, they'll kick you out the trap;" and to the poor, "Mind you hate the rich, and insult them as much as you can. They love you just about as well, and for the same purpose, as a weasel does a rabbit." Who says to us clergymen, "It's no good your trying to influence those working men; they're all sceptics, infidels, secularists, freethinkers; they're utterly corrupt, depraved, and hopeless;" and then comes to you working men and says, "Don't you be gulled by those sleek, close-shaven priests. They don't believe what they're paid to preach; it's only fit for women and children." I wish that we could induce these irascible incendiaries to say with the Psalmist, "I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue." They ought to be dealt with as were two of their bilious brotherhood in the old days of duelling, when they had provoked a quarrel between two friends, kindling a spark into a flame with their malignant, slanderous breath, and when finally they had persuaded them to fight, kindly volunteering to arrange and superintend. Happily, through the intervention of wise counsellors, the combatants discovered, before the crisis, that they had been deceived; met, and made a material alteration in the programme. When the word was given to fire, they aimed and shot at their seconds; and when one of the meddlers had received a bullet in the calf of his leg, and the other had noticed a disagreeable whistling sound in the neighbourhood of his hat, the principals declared that

their honour was quite satisfied, and the party broke up.

Is not the moral mainly this?—that the more those who have the same interest and vocation are brought together, and open their hearts to each other; the more we act upon the Divine injunction, “If thy brother shall trespass against thee,” be he rich or poor, “go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother;” and the less we have to do with “envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults;” the more we realize our inseparable dependence, and, above all, our brotherhood as Christians, and our obligations to bear one another’s burden; the more shall we respect and love one another; and that, as we recognize the duty and feel the desire, we shall have the power to help each other, in resisting that which is false and cruel, and in encouraging that which is just and kind.

You have another lot of friends, you working men, far less selfish, far more sober-minded and sincere, who don’t want your votes, who abhor sedition and schism, and follow peace with all men, but who are, nevertheless, disappointing. I mean those who are continually bewailing your errors and your troubles, denouncing and deploring and suggesting that somebody else should do something (the date and the method to be fixed hereafter) to alter and to improve. The rest of society being in the most perfect condition of religious and moral health, the working man has

been pronounced to be in a galloping consumption, and all his friends and neighbours want to look at his tongue, feel his pulse, and write him a prescription. Infallible remedies are suggested—the perusal of tracts, the hearing of sermons, the cold-water cure, etc., etc. I am reminded of a scene which I have often witnessed, when one of my parishioners has been suddenly struck down by accident or illness. The bed on which he lies is surrounded by all the old women in the neighbourhood, each insisting on a different treatment, all groaning dismally, and predicting speedy dissolution. My first process was always to show them the door, and then to open the window.

Open the window—more pure air and warm sunshine! The working man must be inclined to say to such a concourse of physicians (to those, especially, who do not tell him where their medicines are to be made up, or who is to pay for them), “Gentlemen, don’t let me monopolize your attention, or absorb your valuable time. There are, I am told, invalids elsewhere who stand in need of repairs. For example, you say that I am suffering from a want of refinement in my diversions, that my sports are cruel and my pastimes coarse, and you ask me to give them up, though you offer me nothing in their place. Well, doctors, if you will go to Hurlingham and other similar resorts, you will find cases quite as urgent as our hunting of the rabbit or the rat; the noble sportsman killing and maiming pigeons let out of a

trap, or driving five hundred pheasants into corners, whence they rise reluctantly in the familiar presence of those who have reared and fed them, and surrounded by half a dozen guns.

"You tell me that my mind is darkened and depraved by literature which is ghastly, lewd, and profane; by entertainments, by songs and dances, which are also more or less immoral and obscene. May I ask what course of treatment you pursue with those ladies and gentlemen who are suffering from French novels, or from those plays in which adultery, denounced in the Gospel as a deadly sin, is represented as a pathetic romance, or as an amusing jest?

"You wisely warn me against betting and gambling, and bid me deposit every farthing, which I do not want for my necessities, in the Post-Office or the Savings Bank. Pray what are you doing for those chronic cases at Tattersall's and Newmarket? Have you discovered any successful salve for those bad *legs* which Holloway has failed to cure? Why are there no £5 banks for the rich as well as penny banks for the poor? Is there anything new in strait-waistcoats for those unhappy lunatics, who give thousands of pounds for horses and bulls, hundreds for orchids, and twenty for a bantam cock?"

You know, and I know, what sort of doctor is wanted for the working man. Not the man who remarks, "You're looking sallow and shrunk for want of a little more fresh air and exercise, and I wish you may get it—good morning;" but the man who says,

“You are getting rather thick on the ground in these parts, and I have bought and planted some twenty acres of garden for your rest and recreation.” The working man wants no learned inspector to inform him “that he ought to be ashamed of his ignorance, and that he should read theological, historical, and scientific works, instead of newspapers and other rubbish.” He prefers the announcement, “I have built you a Free Library, well stored with all kinds of pleasant and instructive books, to be always open for your use.”

When Sir Francis Crossley presented a spacious park to the working men of Halifax, he said, “I attribute the success which has enabled me to offer these grounds to my fellow-townsmen mainly to this incident, that, when we first passed through the gates of the great mill yonder, my mother said, ‘If the Lord prosper us in this place, the poor shall taste of it.’” How could the poor taste of it more sweetly than in fresh air and fair surroundings? It seems to me that such places should be multiplied, not only by private munificence, but by national outlay. Surely one of the first anxieties of a government should be the physical as well as the moral condition of the people. Surely the commercial man, the employer of labour, must perceive, in his consideration of profit and loss, if he have no higher motive, the supreme importance of that power, which health alone can give, to see quickly, and to strike strongly, and to endure hard, continuous work.

How much more, then, should the Christian, who professes to regard all men as brethren, who has been taught that if one member suffer all the members suffer with it—how much more should he strive to brighten the lives and lighten the burdens of the sons of toil? As it is, is there not too much truth in the sorrowful sentence that, “the right to dwell freely in a grimy street, to drink freely in the neighbouring public-house, and to walk freely between the high walls and palings and hedges of jealously preserved estates, is about all that the just and equal laws of England secure to the mass of the population”? Well might Tennyson ask—

“ Why should not these great sirs
Give up their parks a dozen times a year,
And let the people breathe? ”

Pure air, not carbon nor chemicals. And, therefore, I regard as among the truest friends of you working men, those who would improve the structural comforts and the atmospheric surroundings of your homes. For example, I have for many years, as some of you know, taken much practical interest in cottage and window-gardening. Not long ago I attended an exhibition of the latter, of plants grown by working men in their houses, and I noticed that a very large proportion of the prizes was awarded to those who lived in Peabody's Buildings. They were fair specimens of healthful growth and careful cultivation, but no amount of attention could ever have produced them in the ordinary abode of working men. “I

don't wonder," said Lord Derby, the grandfather of the present earl, and the fearless "Rupert of debate,"—"I don't wonder at men craving for stimulants who live in an atmosphere which would kill an oak!" All praise and honour to the American philanthropist, and to all who would improve the dwellings of the poor.

True friends of the working man are they, who are proving to those who will see out of their eyes, or think with their brains, that it is as unnecessary and unprofitable, as it is unhealthful and unjust, to darken the light and pollute the air, which God designed for us all. True friends, who, like Mr. Carpenter, by his lectures, and Mr. Herbert Fletcher, of Bolton, by his smokeless chimneys, and Mr. Samuel Elliott, of Newbury, Berks, by his recent practical experiments on the Thames Embankment,* have proved that this smoke nuisance may be easily and inexpensively abolished. The determination of the question, light or darkness, fresh air or foul, cheeks ruddy or sallow, height five feet or six, weight seven stone or twelve, rests with you working men. If you prefer gloom to brightness, melancholy to mirth, debility to vigour, your silence will give consent; but if you think, with the inspired Preacher, that "truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is to behold the sun;" if you have a wish to see the leaves once more on the trees, and the fish once more in your sparkling streams, you have only to send those

* See the *Times*, December 2, 1893.

candidates to Parliament whom you can trust to help you, not only by the enforcement of the laws, already made, but largely evaded, for the prevention of the smoke nuisance, but by additional and more stringent legislation.

There are surroundings far more noxious than smoke, far more perilous to some of you working men than the carbon clouds of your factories, or the impure air of overcrowded homes. I mean the deadly gases of the mines, the poisonous fumes and particles which you inhale with the breath, or absorb through the skin—in the manufacture, for example, of white lead, in enamelling, painting, etc.; and therefore they are your true friends who, like the late Lord Shaftesbury, and other practical philanthropists, draw public attention to these pernicious employments, with a view to minimize the evil influence, and to guard your health and security. Hence the beneficial results of the Factories Acts, and the hopes entertained of further assistance from the Employers' Liabilities Bill, which is now before the Houses of Parliament.

He, again, is a true friend of yours, who helps in every way to supply you with good and cheap food, who does his best to deliver you from suspicious meat, superannuated fish, false weights, short measures, and bad beer.

Some of you have asked me what I think about strikes. I have thought a great deal about strikes, read about them, talked about them, made inquiries about them, and have collected a large amount of

information, which would absorb our interest and determine our verdict, were it not for the embarrassing fact that one-half of it contradicts the other, with a positive and hopeless defiance. *Now* I am assured that the mine-owners and coal-merchants are rolling (I don't understand why, or how, they roll) in riches, and *then* I am told by proprietors and purveyors themselves that they are on their way to the workhouse. They are like those commercial gentlemen at Coketown, of whom Charles Dickens writes in "Hard Times," and who always announced themselves to be insolvent when they were asked to do anything unpleasant; they were ruined when they were required to send neighbouring children to school; they were ruined when inspectors were appointed to look into their works; they were ruined when such inspectors considered it doubtful whether they were quite justified in chopping people up with their machinery; they were utterly undone when it was hinted that perhaps they need not always make quite so much smoke.

One day I hear that the men on strike are the most laborious, thrifty, temperate, peaceful, of their kind, and the next that they do a minimum of work, never save a penny, drink with the drunken, and smite their fellow-servants.

So that to me, as to another resident at Coketown, Stephen Blackpool, it seems "all a muddle." Some of my ecclesiastical brethren have tried to clarify with the filter of their benevolence, but they have

only stirred up the mud. They have not been encouraged. One, I know, high in authority, largely gifted with benevolence and with brains, has done his best and bravest, as a mediator; but after he had addressed a meeting of colliers, I was told by a villager who had just returned from it that "some on 'em said they should like to shoot 'im."

For those who are not experts, or have no special claims on obedience, to interfere between the employers and the employed (I pray you, my brothers, not to surrender the grand old English title of "workman" for this brand-new French epithet, *employé*!) is usually as imprudent as to join in a quarrel between husband and wife.

I remember that, when I asked one of those fluent speakers, who were sent throughout the country by Joseph Arch to declaim against the sufferings of the farm-labourer, why he and his colleagues spoke so bitterly about the clergy, he answered, "that we were well acquainted with their wrongs, and should have led the battle against the owners and occupiers of the land." I replied that I had lived some sixty years among landlords, farmers, and labourers; that the latter were in better, and the two former in worse, circumstances than I had ever known them; that it was not for us to dictate, or take sides, with regard to pecuniary payments or other worldly matters, of which we had scanty information; but as much as lay in us to live peaceably with all men, and to preach to all alike the Divine principles of "the faith

which worketh by love." If we can persuade men to be Christians, not only with their lips on Sundays, but in their lives always, we shall find a power to prevent injustice and to promote peace, which Parliament, philosophy, and eloquence can only help to win.

Proclaiming to Christians their sacred obligation to "bear one another's burdens," not only from our pulpits, but from our example, not only in churches, but in the homes of the needy, the sick, and sorrowful, and proving ourselves to be faithful servants of Him who is no respecter of persons, of Him who included in the proofs of His Divinity that "the poor had the gospel preached to them," welcoming all alike, without money and without price, as children to their Father's house, we shall attain unto our heart's desire, to be to you, working men, "the friend that loveth at all times, and the brother born for adversity."

Yes, my brothers, I speak that which I know, and testify that which I have seen, during such a long and large acquaintance with Church life as is given to few, when I tell you that the most anxious ambition of those who are doing the hardest and best work for their Master, is to bring back to the fold those sheep which, in the dark and cloudy day of selfish indolence, were neglected and scattered abroad.

I am speaking now to some who can bear witness that their labour is not in vain. "Do you know," a working man said to a clergyman, "why I first came to church? Because I saw you at your work, early

and late; not like some of your brethren, who seem to me to work on Sundays only, and to have six Bank Holidays a week."

I have heard of a lad, who was treated with so much severity by his parents because he was not quite so clever as his brothers and sisters, that he suddenly disappeared from his home, and was not heard of for years. Then a reliable report came that he had been recognized in a distant land, and his mother persuaded a friend, who was going there, to make inquiries, and, if he found him, to give him a letter. At last he met him, but he seemed to have lost all his interest in the old country, and to be quite indifferent as to his family. Then the friend gave him his mother's letter. He took it reluctantly, as though he hardly cared to read it; but, as he read, a great change came over him. For she wrote that she had never ceased to mourn for him all those years since he left, that she had sorely repented of the unkindness which had driven him away, and that she besought him to return. He put down the letter, hid his face in his hands, and burst into tears. Then he seemed to be considering, in an agony of intense emotion, what he should do; and then he raised his head, and spoke, with quivering lips, his resolution, "*Tell her I'm coming home!*"

And so I believe that if the Church of England seeks those whom she has estranged, and assures them that she bitterly deplores the separation, and that she is yearning and preparing for their return—

I believe that, in God's good time, she will hear the answer for which so many of us are working with all our energy, and praying with all our hearts, "*Tell her that we are coming home!*"

Permit me to remind you, ere I say "good night," that the best friend—and if he is not the best friend, he is the worst enemy—of the working man is himself. Nothing from without—no sympathy, gifts, legislation—can, of themselves, bring happiness. It is made impossible by Divine decrees—"In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread;" "Owe no man anything, but to love one another"—that idleness or selfishness should be happy. Water cannot rise above its level, and where there are no high reservoirs, no fountains dance and sparkle in the sun. To thine own self be true—to your Christianity, to your manhood, to your duty, your work, your wife, your children, your neighbours; and then, in a conscience void of offence toward God and man, in the contentment of your home, with its "hearts of each other sure," you will find a peace which the world cannot give, a possession which no gold can buy, a nobility which no king can confer—"an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

XIII.

BIBLE TEMPERANCE.—I.

“Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.”—1 COR. ix. 25.

“Let your moderation be known unto all men.”—PHIL. iv. 5.

FEW of us ever forget the first sight of a drunken man! The feelings of astonishment, abhorrence, pity, and shame! What a desecration of all that is to be admired in manhood! What a dethronement of its majesty! What a ruin of the temple of God! The body which God made in His own image, polluted and defiled! The light gone from the eye; the tongue, which should be the best member that we have, incoherent, if not blasphemous; the mind bewildered; the limbs powerless, staggering to and fro! Well might the Spartan fathers call their children to look upon the drunken slave, that they might ever be impressed by a dread of such degradation. Well might our king of poets complain, “Oh that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy, pleasance, revel, and applause, transform ourselves to beasts!”

Some to whom I speak may remember painfully their own first act of drunkenness—the helplessness, the folly, the sickness, the abject misery, the humiliation.

Such in both cases, in others or in ourselves, were the Divine warnings with which our merciful Father ever teaches His children when they first enter the ways of unrighteousness; they are the premonitory symptoms of a disease which will end in death unless the plague is stayed. They are the first drops which fall before the thunderstorm—the tears of the tempest weeping for the havoc which is to follow. God, in His mercy, always sets up hindrances to sin. An angel meets Balaam in the way. A voice whispers, “It is wrong, do not do it; it is false, do not speak it; it is not yours, do not take it.” And if we were persuaded and overcome by the powers of evil—“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life”—then come disappointment, fear of discovery, an estrangement from those whom we had disobeyed or refused. The apples of Sodom were as ashes in the mouth.

Oh, happy they who heed; happy they who—like a child wandering by the river’s brink, or stepping upon the railway, hears its mother’s voice, and comes to her embrace—obey the heavenly summons, “in returning and rest, shall be saved,” and hasten homeward.

But what of those whom Satan deludes with promises of new pleasures, which shall not pall; to whom worldly companions say, “It’s too late now to

retrace your steps"? What, for example, are the results of drunkenness? What is drunkenness? It includes a great deal more than a man staggering helplessly along the pavement; it means excess, it means an immoderate use, and therefore an abuse, of that which God gives for our health, cheerfulness, refreshment of spirit. It means that superfluous indulgence which makes a man less qualified to do his work; which makes him dull, idle, irritable, morose. There is many a man who is "the worse for drink"—whose physical and mental strength is weakened by it, whose home is rendered unhappy—who never shows signs of what is called drunkenness. He stops at the boundary, when he knows that further indulgence would bring him to an exposure, but he has overstepped the lines of temperance. And therefore He who spake as never man—therefore our Lord warns, "Take heed lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day overtake you unawares." Any use of stimulants which unsteadies the hands, clouds the brain, sours the temper, is drunkenness in the eyes of God. The man who goes on sipping through the day, and every day, is not seldom a worse drunkard than he who, taking a quantity of intoxicating drink now and then, in a short space of time is conspicuously and ostentatiously drunk. But a man may commit suicide as surely by degrees as by a sudden stroke or plunge; the dram taken at short intervals may be as fatal as the prussic acid or the pistol-shot.

But what about the more patent results of drunkenness? It is not only that millions of money, centuries of labour, are wasted by it;* not only that the brain is diseased, and the heart weakened, and the limbs crippled, and the face disfigured—"Wine above all things doth God's stamp deface"—the man abased, the home made miserable; that women are outraged, beaten, and murdered, children untaught, starved, and in rags; not only that all which is high, and noble, and generous, and brave, and pure is destroyed by drunkards; not only that this sin has tarnished our national honour and enfeebled our influence; that our emigrants have brought a curse and not a blessing to those whom they have taught the use of it; it is not only that earthly sorrows have been multiplied a thousandfold, that temporal happiness has been marred, and the bodily health has been ruined, but countless souls for which the Lord Jesus died have been lost.

Not only at home, but abroad, for our missionary efforts have been sorely let and hindered by this vice. It has been said to our missionaries, "You come to us with your Bible in one hand, and in the other there is a cup of deadly wine; you tell us to give our full strength of mind and body to Christ, and then

* It is stated by a Glasgow writer, Alexander Wylie, in a paper on "Labour, Leisure, and Luxury," that there are large workshops in which men securing from 30s. to 60s. per week are clothed in rags, and cannot be trusted with expensive tools; that Tuesday at midday is the recognized time for beginning the week's work after the utter prostration caused by the drinking on Saturday and Sunday.

you Christians stupify us with opium." So it was said by an Indian who was reprov'd for drinking whisky: "Yes, it is too true, we use it too freely; but we do not make it." And again, when a British officer was trying to persuade a Mohammedan to be a Christian, and a drunken Englishman passed, the native said, "Would you have me to be like that? My religion makes it impossible, but yours does not."

Drunkenness ministers to lust and to every evil passion. The police have given frequent evidence that most of the men and women whom they have seen going into brothels were more or less intoxicated. How often do we read in our police and assize reports of the prisoner saying, "I was mad with drink!" The chaplain and governor of the Stafford Gaol made a long and patient investigation, and arrived at the result that ninety-two per cent. of the convicted cases had to do with drunkenness. How often we read, in their last terrible confessions which take place in the condemned cell, that these wretched men, who are soon to die in obedience to the Divine law, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed," have entreated their nearest and dearest, and sometimes all who could hear them from the scaffold, to keep away from the drink!

Drunkenness enslaves a man's soul more than any other vice, because it disarms him of his reason and of the wisdom whereby he might be cured; and, therefore, commonly it grows upon him with age, making him more and more a fool, and less and less

a man. I need not add many examples, for all history is but too full of them, and the drunkenness of Noah and Lot is upon record to eternal ages, that in those early instances and righteous persons, and in a drunkenness far less criminal than it is among Christians now, God might show that very great evils are prepared to punish this vice—no less than shame and slavery and incest—the first upon Noah, the second upon one of his sons, and the third in the person of Lot.*

But we need not go to distant dates and scenes. The miserable results of drunkenness may be seen in our streets to-night. Men and women for whom Christ died glorying in their shame, in the filthy conversation of the wicked, in the mockery of religion, “having their understanding darkened because of the blindness of their heart, who being past feeling have given themselves up to work all uncleanness with greediness,” having a devilish delight in sin, akin to that of the murderer in White-chapel and Spitalfields. Who could believe that the lips which speak those foul words were once taught to pray; that those faces, flushed and disfigured, were once bright with happy innocence?

It is told that when the great painter Leonardo da Vinci was at work upon one of the most famous pictures in the world, the Last Supper of our blessed Lord with His Apostles, in which He gave His last and best gift to His Church, the sacrament of His

* See Bishop Jeremy Taylor's “Works,” iii. 52.

Body and Blood, he had made studies for the portraits of several of the Apostles from likenesses of good men whom he knew at Milan, but had not found any faces to suggest a countenance for the Saviour. At last his attention was drawn to one Pietro Bandinelli, a youth who sang in the choir of the cathedral, and had not only a very exquisite voice, a most attractive face, and devout demeanour, but also the reputation of a blameless life. He made a study from this man for his picture. He had just finished it when Pietro left to study music at Rome. There he came among evil companions, was tempted to drinking, gambling, and worse, and rapidly fell into the vilest dissipation, poverty, crime. Leonardo's picture occupied him for some years. When he had completed all but one face, that of the traitor Judas, he was walking one day in the streets of Milan when he met a miserable object, a man in rags, unkempt, unclean, with a villainous look on his face, and it struck him that here was the expression he wanted. He took the man to his studio; and when he had made and paid for his sketch, he was astonished to hear from his visitor, "You do not seem to remember that you have painted me before," and to find that it was indeed Pietro. Yet there is a far more awful change than this outward transformation—from purity to pollution; from the service of God, which is glorious liberty and perfect freedom, to the slavery of Satan, the most cruel of all tyrants; from light to darkness, from hope unto despair.

And for what? It has been quaintly said that "the head of the drunkard aches longer than his throat is pleased; that his heaviness is refreshed before he comes to drunkenness, and when he arrives thither he hath but changed his sorrow and taken a crime to boot." Well may the Apostle ask, "What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of these things is death"—death not only to themselves, but others. Oh, if, as has been thought, it is part of the felicity of the saints in Paradise to know the good which they have done by their prayers and by their charity ("Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for their works do follow them"), and if it be partly the punishment of the reprobates to know the misery which they have brought, not only upon themselves, but upon others, what must be the remorse of the drunkard to know the sorrow which his example has induced? I think one of the saddest sights I ever heard of was seen by a friend who told it to me—a drunken father giving his little boy, not more than seven years old, sips from his glass.

If this be so, I need not say how gladly and heartily we should welcome and should help all efforts which are made to promote temperance.

What is temperance? It is the moderate use—I am speaking of it in the restricted sense which applies to our present subject,—the moderate use and enjoyment of meat and drink, such as may best consist with our health, our physical strength, and mental

vigour, and may not hinder, but help us in our work and in our duty to God and man. It is the thankful application of God's gifts for our need and for our cheerful refreshment. In the words of Solomon, we eat our bread with joy, and drink our wine with a merry heart, because we feel that God accepteth our works, and that we need this daily sustentation that we may do them bravely and heartily. Whether, therefore, we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we do all, as St. Paul bids the Corinthians, in the name of the Lord Jesus. We say our grace before and after meals, using God's creatures as not abusing them, and saying with the Apostle, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."

How, then, shall we best succeed in our efforts to diminish the fatal results of drunkenness, and to increase those habits of temperance and moderation which are essential to our happiness here and for ever? There is no matter in which the old proverb, "Prevention is better than cure," is more true than in this matter of temperance. To reclaim a confirmed drunkard is a task to daunt any but those who have faith in God's omnipotent mercy, and there is hardly a sin with which it is so difficult to deal. The pledge of total abstinence seems to be the only remedy, but few comparatively take it. Many break it, and even where it is kept it brings new temptations.

We should, therefore, teach our children that as Christians they belong to a temperance society called

the Church, and that they are pledged to temperance; that our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost, and that whoso defileth the temple of God him will God destroy; that we are, therefore, bounden, as the Catechism teaches us, to keep these bodies in temperance, soberness, and chastity; and that we shall be judged hereafter according to the deeds done in the body, and shall be happy or miserable as those deeds have been good or evil.

Moreover, that God has given to us all power to keep ourselves undefiled if we will ask it in prayer, and study His revealed will in the Holy Scriptures, and worship Him, and do works of mercy in His Name, and seek Him in the Holy Communion, so that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood.

And we must teach them that temperance is to be practised not merely as a matter of health and a means of getting earthly advantages, but as being a duty which we owe to Him, and as enabling us to offer Him a more true and laudable service.

The Church teaches temperance, not total abstinence. Such an imposition of a vow seems repugnant to Holy Scripture. It is tantamount to condemnation of one of God's creatures, and to an assumption that we are wiser than the Creator Himself. Wine is one of God's creatures. We call it so in the most solemn office of our Church—Holy Communion—"Grant that we, receiving these Thy creatures of bread and wine."

We can hardly be said to believe the Bible if we proscribe the beneficial use of wine. "Wine maketh glad the heart of man" (Ps. civ. 15); "Give wine unto those that be of heavy hearts" (Prov. xxxi. 6).

The Manichæans condemned wine as if it were a creature of the evil one; but the Church condemned them in canons which said, "If any clergyman abstain from wine not for the sake of discipline, but in a spirit of detestation of wine, forgetting that all God's creatures are good, and pronouncing censure on creation, let him repent or be deposed." And again, "We solemnly charge all to refrain from intemperance, not that we altogether forbid to drink wine, for this would be to deal insolently with what God has given to men for gladness of heart, but that according to the Holy Scriptures they be not guilty of excess." Tertullian sums up the views of the early Church: "We are thankful to God, the Lord and Creator of all; we repudiate no fruit of His work, but we practise temperance lest we should abuse it."

The Manichæans in the Holy Communion did not repel the juice of grapes, but condemned wine; whereupon St. Augustine exclaims, "What perverseness not to object to grapes, but to call wine the gall of the prince of darkness!"

So in our own time. Unfermented juice of the grape, some say, fruit of the vine, is mentioned, not wine. Answer—It is certain that the wine used by our Lord at the Eucharist was such as would intoxicate.

The Holy Eucharist was instituted in the spring,

in the month Nisan, nearly a year after the vintage, and could not have been unfermented wine.

It was certain also that in the days of the Apostles that which was ministered in the Cup of Blessing at the Holy Communion was wine which could intoxicate. We learn this from St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 20): "When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper . . . one is hungry and another is drunken."

I repeat, therefore, that the Church teaches her children from the Bible temperance, and not total abstinence. If a man cannot drink without drinking too much, let him keep from it altogether; "if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee;" let him sign the pledge; but let him remember that in so doing he is making a confession of infirmity, and should be the last to say to him who can resist temptation, and needs no such coercion, "Stand by, I am better than thou." He is surely the nobler and braver man who acts from principle and not constraint, who has the power to choose between use and abuse, moderation and excess, and chooses aright. "If temperance is a virtue," it was well said, "you take away my power to exercise it when you make me a total abstainer."

Temperance is the true cure for drunkenness. Let us teach it, pray for it, do all we can to promote it. We cannot obtain it from Acts of Parliament, though they may render, and do render, powerful aid. We cannot secure it from a merely secular education,

though in this we also have a powerful ally. We shall fail to promote it by wholesale condemnations of the public-house and the publican (who, in many cases, abhors the drunkard, if only as being the worst customer he has) without any attempt to improve the system or to influence the individual. We shall be better employed in Christian efforts to raise the religious and moral tone of the people, to teach them the sacred dignity and the true beauty of manhood and womanhood, the purpose for which God made them and Christ redeemed them, and the Holy Spirit is ever pleading within them, even the salvation of their souls. Let us do what we can to make their homes more healthful and bright, that they may find their happiness there. "If you'll come and live in our court," a drunkard said to a philanthropist, "you'll soon take to the whisky."

Above all, let us have more faith in God's grace, in His Word, in His sacraments, and less in man's modern inventions; more faith in the Church and less in human societies; more faith in the Divine Master and less in His servants, whenever, in all humility, but always with a sure and certain hope, we would overcome evil with good.

XIV.

BIBLE TEMPERANCE.—II.

“My grace is sufficient for thee.”—2 Cor. xii. 9.

WHAT is grace? It is the marvellous lovingkindness of God in the redemption and restoration of fallen man. “God so loved the world,” wicked as it was and is, “that He gave His only begotten Son,” to this end, “that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He would have all men to be saved. He hath not only opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers, placed us on the road that leads to it, sent us a Guide to lead us unto all truth; but He is Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He has not only received us into the ark of His Church, and given us a chart of the voyage, a true compass, an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast; but He is Himself in the ship, ever ready when we cry, “Save us, we perish!” to arise and still the storm. He has not only received us into His flock, marked us with the sign of His Cross, taken us into His fold; but He goes before us, and we know His voice. He leads us to fresh pastures and by the

waters of comfort, and in the valley of the shadow of death His rod and His staff comfort us.

“O happy band of pilgrims,
If onward ye will tread,
With Jesus as your Fellow,
To Jesus as your Head!”

God's grace is sufficient for them, and they go from strength to strength. As St. Paul writes, “After that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration”—that is, by baptism—“and by the renewal of the Holy Ghost”—that is, by the continual influence of the Holy Spirit granted to our prayers, and communicated to us through the Sacraments and the Scriptures—“that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

“By grace ye are saved,” says St. Paul. “Baptism saves us,” says St. Peter. There is no contradiction. “Except a man be born again of water and of the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;” “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” But there are conditions. “The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.” We must grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, ever to increase in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man. We may “quench the Spirit,” instead of “making our calling and election sure.” We are made members of Christ, but we may yield our members

servants to sin, yea, make the members of Christ members of a harlot. We are children of God, children of light. We may forget our covenant with Him, and, forsaking the Guide of our youth, may no longer be followers of God as dear children, but children of wrath, disobedience, bondage, darkness, Satan ; of those whom St. Peter describes as "having eyes full of adultery, that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls, an heart they have exercised with covetous practices, cursed children."

We are inheritors of the kingdom of heaven ; but, like Esau, we may sell our birthright, and find no place for repentance. And it seems to me a very awful consideration, that these alternatives, these glorious privileges, these disastrous refusals, this power of choosing between good and evil, Christ and anti-Christ, life and death, are not taught by parents and god-parents, pastors and teachers, so earnestly and commonly as assuredly they ought to be ; that the voice of Moses is so rarely heard in our midst, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing : therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live : that thou mayest love the Lord thy God." Or of Joshua, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Or of Jesus, the son of Sirach, "Before man is life and death, and whatsoever he liketh shall be given him."

How many fathers repeat the Divine warning to

their sons, "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost? Whoso therefore defileth the temple of God, him shall God destroy"? How many mothers say to their daughters, "Your adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and the wearing of gold, and the putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price"?

Were we taught, do we teach, the beauty of innocence, the power of purity, the masked ugliness and the cancerous corruption of sin, as they are revealed to us here? And what miserable excuses! "We must not suggest evil" (as though the lust of the flesh which remains in the regenerate, the world, and the devil would not suggest it), instead of showing how to overcome evil with good. "Youth must have its fling"—a direct contradiction of the text, "My grace is sufficient;" of the beloved Apostle's words, "For greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world;" of St. Paul's, "He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it;" of our dear Lord's promise, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Or sometimes they say, "We must not make religion distasteful; children have lessons enough without being bored with religion. We have

taught them to say prayers; they have learned the Catechism; we take them to church on Sunday; that is enough." But the religion of the Cross must be distasteful, because it teaches us hard work, severe duty, self-denial, a battle against subtle enemies, which we can never win unless we endure hardships as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and fight the good fight of faith. Thus taught, they are prepared and armed; but if we do not forewarn them of danger, nor reveal its nature and methods, how shall they resist or escape? On the contrary, they will gradually lose the spiritual instincts of their baptism, and the remonstrances of conscience will cease to plead. The weeds will spring up in the neglected soil, and choke the Word until it becometh unfruitful.

Without care and culture, there must be a reversion to type. Cease to row against the stream, and you drift to the falls. There will be a gradual deterioration and decay. So "the canes of Egypt, when they newly arise from the mud and slime of the Nile, start up into an equal and continual length, and are interrupted with but few knots, and are strong and beauteous, with great distances and intervals; but when they are grown to their full length, they lessen into the point of a pyramid, and multiply their knots and joints, interrupting the fineness and smoothness of their body." So are the steps and declensions of him who does not grow in grace. At first, when he springs up from his impurity by

the waters of baptism, he grows straight and strong, and suffers but few interruptions of piety; then they become weaker and more interrupted, even as men love God and religion less and less, till their old age, instead of being a crown of virtue and perseverance, ends in levity and an unprofitable course. Light and useless are the tufted feathers on the cane; every wind can play with it and abuse it, but no man can make it useful.

“Vice is a monster of such hateful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen;
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
Men first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

So, in too many sad and shameful instances, the young, who have never been taught that sins of uncleanness and impurity are deadly to their souls, and therefore to fear the first approaches and looks of lust, will be easily enticed and ensnared; those who have never taken to heart the declarations of God against drunkenness, will only regard it with ridicule, or resent it with disgust; they who never realized that a false weight is an abomination to the Lord, and that His eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good, will become unscrupulous and fraudulent when they do not fear discovery; when industry has never been accepted as a duty to Him who hath given every man his work to do, idleness will spread as dry rot in wood, or vermin in stagnant waters; he who hath never divined the sacred majesty of truth, first questions its existence as Pilate, and

then crucifies it, and learns a delusion and a lie ; and so to the house which might have been, like the cottages of Nazareth, Bethany, and Capernaum, the home of Christ, come seven evil spirits, seven deadly sins, and make their abode therein. "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah." "They are mad upon their idols ; therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein : and it shall be no more inhabited for ever ; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation."

Is it not a terrible calamity that there are so many millions of men and women, that have entered into a state of sickness and danger, and yet are made to believe that they are in perfect health ; and they do actions, concerning which they never made a question whether they were just or no, nor were ever taught by what names to call them ? For while they observe that chastity and modesty are described by false names, such as coldness of temperament and a silly shyness and awkwardness of behaviour, and contentedness and simplicity are denounced as want of spirit and meanness, and that honesty is declared to be overscrupulous and impracticable, they can, at the same time, be induced to believe that extravagance is generosity, to call lust love, and licence liberty ; and under these false veils virtue slips away, and leaves vice disguised in the same imagery ; and

this fraud may not be discovered until the day of recompense, when all disguises and deceits will fall, and God shall bring every work unto judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. Before the coming of that dreadful day, He whose compassions fail not, whose mercies are new every morning, He who willeth not that any should perish, sends many a warning, many a precious invitation. "Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord; but they say, Wherein shall we return?" The way of truth they have not known. They have done despite to the Spirit of grace. There is only one road which can lead them from the power of Satan to God, and that seems so dreary, so narrow, and steep—the road of repentance. There is not room on it for them and their favourite sin, and they cannot make up their mind to separate. The heart is petrified, the will is paralyzed. All their surroundings, their companions, are evil.

Take, for example, the sin of drunkenness. If that sin once gains the mastery and becomes habitual, its expulsion would seem hopeless, had we not faith in Him to whom all things are possible. Only His grace can convince and convert, restore and reform. But the Holy Spirit cannot coexist with that evil life (and the life of the drunkard is, as a rule, degraded by many sins), for what communion hath light with darkness? What covenant hath Christ with Belial? or the temple of God with idols? And therefore we must regard with great respect and

gratitude all earnest efforts which are made to prepare that poor helpless soul to receive the renovations of grace, and to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and it is meet, right, and our bounden duty that we should support with our prayers and with our alms the endeavours made by the Church of England Temperance Society to induce confirmed drunkards to pledge themselves to total abstinence from all intoxicating drink. It is too late to talk to them about temperance, too late to preach to them from the texts, "Let your moderation be known unto all men;" "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving;" "Using and not abusing His gifts:" they cannot taste without the excess which disgraces and defiles them.

All the same, to these men, while every sympathy and encouragement is given that Christian love evokes, the truth must be also told. That they have broken their pledge, as members of the greatest temperance society of the world, the Church of Jesus Christ, a pledge ten thousand times more solemn than any human society can devise, to keep their bodies in temperance; have resisted instead of accepting that grace which was sufficient to have empowered them to keep their vows; being harnessed and carrying bows, have turned themselves back in the day of battle; and that, so far from being misled by any elations of pride or of confident boasting, they have need to humble themselves in the dust as having

grieved the Holy Spirit of God, and crucified the Son of God afresh. They must be told, moreover, that abstinence from one sin will not condone any other transgression of God's laws.

True temperance means a great deal more than keeping from drunkenness. It means the mastery over all bad passions and tempers, and the substitution of a virtuous and godly living. What says the inspired apostle? "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

In vain are we total abstainers from drink, or temperate in drinking, if we give way to sin in some other form, lasciviousness, dishonesty in business, gluttony, idleness, slandering and evil speaking, extravagance or meanness, anger, hypocrisy, or self-conceit. "Whosoever shall offend in one point, he is guilty of all." We must mount St. Peter's ladder rung by rung: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." And yet another caution is given, though one would hardly have anticipated the need, namely, that he who by joining a new society, and having recourse to a supplementary

system, has declared that his exigency cannot be satisfied by the ordinary channels of grace, must be the last man to criticize or dictate to those who, walking in the old paths where is the good way, have found rest for their souls. He has lost his liberty: they retain theirs. And it can only excite our indignation to hear one, who has only ceased to be a drunkard by a sudden constraint, assailing a lifelong temperance, denouncing those who will not, at his bidding, forego that which they believe is given to them by God for their enjoyment and use, because he has abused and discarded the gift, and is deluding himself with the idea that he has reached a much higher place in righteousness than those who are so far his superiors. Rather let him fear in all humility, "lest the dog return to his vomit again, and the sow to her wallowing in the mire."

In his evidence before a Committee of the London Diocesan Conference, the chaplain of one of her Majesty's prisons said, "There were 78,000 persons apprehended in one year (1882) in the metropolitan district, including 26,000 drunkards," and he added, "it is rare to find a prisoner who has not, at some time or other, been a total abstainer."

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," and then his anxious self-distrust will command the pity and the prayers of all good men. The society offers this pledge of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks to those who, having apprehensions of peril to themselves, think to find an additional

security, or who desire by the aid of self-sacrifice to set an example to others. However widely we may differ from their method, and doubt its successful issue, we must respect and honour the motives. Marriage is honourable to all, and was ordained as a remedy against sin and to avoid fornication, that such persons as have not the gift of continency might marry and keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's Body. But while St. Paul writes, "Let every man have his own wife, and every woman her own husband," he adds (speaking by permission, not by commandment), "I would that all men were as I myself," unmarried. So that total abstinence from intoxicating drinks may be like celibacy, the higher life, and our Lord's words may be applicable to both. He that can receive it, let him receive it; but the cases are exceptional, surrounded by subtle allurements, and occasions of falling, abridgments of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. And to him who would press such vows of abstinence upon others who are not only unwilling to receive them, but are convinced that in their case they would be hurtful, to those must be given St. Peter's answer to him who insisted on circumcision for the Gentile converts, "God has given them the Holy Ghost; now therefore why trouble ye Him to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."

But this society is called the Church of England Temperance Society, and it is for the promotion of temperance that I plead most heartily to-night, and ask your prayers and alms. Bible temperance. For while we read in the Holy Scriptures of the curse of drunkenness, with all its foul attendants and its disastrous results, from the time when Noah was drunken, and his sin not only brought disgrace upon himself, but slavery upon his son, who took advantage of it, and on his descendants, just as now this sin of drunkenness is visited upon the third and fourth generation; from the days when Lot's drunkenness was followed by the vilest of sins, to the time when St. Paul warned all Christians not to be drunk with wine wherein is excess, not to keep company, and not to eat with drunkards, for no drunkard could enter heaven; and St. Paul's Lord and ours bade us take heed to ourselves, lest our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day of judgment come upon us unawares; and again spoke to us of the fearful doom of the evil servant, who because his lord was absent, began to smite his fellow-servants and to eat and drink with the drunken; though God's people were forbidden to add drunkenness to thirst; though the Nazarites took a vow of total abstinence from wine for a time, after which it is written that they might drink wine; and the sons of Jonadab and the sons of Rechab were commanded not to drink wine, nor build houses, nor sow seed, but dwell in tents; and St. John the Baptist came

neither eating nor drinking; yet we read in the same sacred records that, under the Patriarchal dispensation, to Abraham, who was called "the friend of God," Melchizedek, King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; that Isaac included among the blessings which he invoked upon Jacob, "God give thee plenty of corn and wine," and that he said of Esau, "With corn and wine have I sustained him;" that under the Mosaic dispensation the Land of Promise, the land which was the glory of all lands, was a land of barley and vines, of corn and wine, for the grapes were not only to be eaten as food, but to be put into the wine-press and used as wine; and a tithe of wine was given to the Levite, and all men were permitted to drink it, temperately and thankfully, as one of God's temporal blessings, to their refreshment and delectation.

And so as we read onward, in the Book of Judges, "That when the trees said to the vine, Come thou and reign over us, the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man?" (Judg. ix. 12, 13). We find the man after God's own heart, who, when the Ark was brought back from the house of Obed-Edom, dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, a loaf of bread, a piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. We hear him speaking of "wine that maketh glad the heart of man;" and Solomon, his son, though he warns us against them that tarry long at the wine, their woes and their wounds, yet bids us to "give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of

heavy hearts." And so in the Prophets, while they warn against drunkenness, they speak of wine as a blessing; as in Hosea, "The Lord shall bless the corn and the wine;" in Joel, "I will send you the corn and the wine, and ye shall be satisfied with it;" and in Haggai it is recorded as a punishment, "I called for a drought upon the corn and the wine." And again, "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God accepteth thy gifts." So in the Apocryphal Books, which "the Church doth read for examples of life and instruction of manners," we find, "Wine is as good as life to man, if it be drunk moderately. Wine measurably drunk, and in season, bringeth gladness of the heart, and cheerfulness of the mind; but wine drunken with excess maketh bitterness of the mind, with brawling and quarrelling."

And what do we find when we pass from the Old to the New Covenant; from the Law to the Gospel? We find our Divine Master, in all things our example, not only recognizing the right use of wine by making it the example of His spiritual teaching, referring to it with a commendation of those who know how best to preserve it; but we hear of Him as eating and drinking, so that some said, "Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber." We read that at the suggestion of His holy mother, who evidently had not taught Him to regard wine as evil, He did not take the opportunity of informing the wedding guests at Cana that the water, with which the vessels before

them were filled, was the best beverage they could drink, but He sympathized with their harmless mirth and made the water wine. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, at Cana of Galilee, but thankfully and temperately, in the love and fear of the Lord (so that Jesus was invited, and His mother, to the marriage), and so there came a blessing on their feast. They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, in the days of Noe, from mere sensual appetite and lust, and the flood came and took them all away.

Let me add, that just as wine was used religiously in the services of the tabernacle and the temple under the older covenant, so our blessed Lord chose wine as one of God's creations, to be sanctified for ever in the administration of the Holy Communion, and said, "Drink ye all of this," and thus commanded it to be received by all His faithful in every age and country in that blessed Sacrament, even till He comes again. And it is certain that at the institution of the Holy Communion our Lord used wine in the common use of the term, that is, a fermented beverage, which would intoxicate. That institution took place at the Passover, and the Passover took place in the spring, and the wine then used must have been nine months old, for in Palestine the vintage takes place in September and October. We know also from Hebrew authorities that the wine commonly used at Passover was such as would intoxicate, and that the same use still continues among the Jews.

We practise temperance, not trusting for a moment in our own strength, or in any human precautions, but in the grace of God, given to us first in Baptism, and abundantly shed upon us by Him who "giveth more grace"—above all to the humble. And as we find that grace sufficient for us in our temptations, the only source and stay of our spiritual life, let us endeavour to bring others also to this faith. Having found that this grace has delivered and delivers us, and made the service of God perfect freedom, let us seek to emancipate others.

Let us not trust in coercive legislation, though it may help and ought to help us. Legal restraints over things lawful in themselves never have been successful, and never will. "Men," says a great authority, "are to be perfected, not by exemption from temptation, but by victory over it." Legislation ought to make provisions such as shall ensure decency and order in our public-houses, and surely might limit their number; and should, in my opinion, punish drunkenness with a much more painful severity—for who is such a nuisance, in public or private life, who so hinders the industry and prosperity of a nation, or the peaceful happiness of home, as the drunkard?—but it cannot prevent the determined drinker from drunkenness. If it closes the public-houses on a Sunday, he will purchase his drink on a Saturday, and get drunk at home. Better education, and refinement of taste, will do much. You may persuade a man, through his common sense, that drunkenness is

ruinous to his happiness, self-respect, and health. You may persuade landlords that sober tenants are better guardians of property, and pay rents more regularly than drunkards. You may provide brighter homes, with more light and air, for those who are brought by a polluted atmosphere to the dram-shop—it is our duty to them and to God to do so. You may provide clubs and reading-rooms, museums, galleries, libraries, gardens, parks, music, and games. I believe that it is our duty to do so; but all these accessories, precious as they are, are but the heralds of a Royal Presence, the preparations to receive it; they are but the scaffolding of the house not made with hands.

It is not the badge on the breast, or the blue ribbon in the coat—it is the grace of God in the heart, truth in the inward parts, which thus can empower to contend with evil, and win that crown which shall be given to him that overcometh. I ask you earnestly to support the Church of England Temperance Society, because it acts upon this great principle of faith, and, while it appeals for all the help which thought and money can give it, declares that its only strength is in its consciousness that, in promoting temperance, it is seeking to do God's work, and that His work must prosper *if it is done in His way.*

XV.

TO SOLDIERS.

“A devout soldier.”—ACTS x. 7.

Is war lawful for those—there are still some who ask the question—who profess a religion of peace? Is not war a curse, a plague, and punishment? Is it not written, “If ye walk contrary unto Me, then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you, and *bring a sword upon you*”? Is not that sword named first of the sore judgments with which God threatens the disobedient? Hath not God said, “Thou shalt do no murder;” “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed;” “He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall surely be put to death”?

The answer may be made—War, with certain restrictions, must not only be lawful, but right, because God’s chosen people were a nation of warriors, led by great and good generals such as Joshua, “and Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah,” fighting against God’s enemies, and encouraged by His ministers, “Hear, O Israel, and be not in fear of your enemies, for the Lord your God fights for you;” nay,

directly by God himself, for the Lord said unto Joshua, "Be not afraid because of them, for to-morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel."

But this reply will evoke a further question—Were there not in the Old Testament greater latitudes of permission than are allowed to us? Moses made concessions for the hardness of man's heart. Christ says so, and He is the Mediator of a better covenant. Have not old things passed away and all things become new under the Gospel? Was not this our Saviour's teaching, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, Love your enemies"? Are not these the words of Jesus, "Put up thy sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword"?

And we find that this argument was maintained, not only in theory but in practice, in the first three centuries of the Christian Church. The commandment, that "the servant of the Lord must not strive," was applied especially to military service; no Christian was permitted to carry arms.

There were special circumstances which added force to this enactment. Christians seemed for a time to expect from Christianity results, which had not only never been promised, but which were opposed to the declarations and prophecies of Christ. They seemed to think that the precepts of the Gospel, and the power of the Holy Spirit, would gradually establish

universal peace; that the nations would beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, neither should they learn war any more.

And the army in their land was a Roman army, and they who joined were not only under Roman discipline, but compelled to conform to their pagan worship, and to take part in pagan sacrifice.

Wherefore we find some of the most saintly writers of that early period protesting against military service. "Can it be lawful," asks Tertullian, "to handle the sword, when the Lord Himself hath declared that he who useth it shall perish with it? Shall the child of peace engage in battle, when he looks upon even the strife of the law-courts as unseemly? Shall he who avenges not even his own wrongs, consign others to prison and torture?" So the martyr Maximilian, "I cannot be a soldier, because I am a Christian." And one of the greatest of the Fathers, Clement of Alexandria, writes, "They who seek peace need neither sword nor bow." "We cannot fight under the emperor," said Origen, "but we will pray for him."

But as time went on both these considerations lost their power. The Cross appeared upon the standard of Constantine, in place of the Roman eagles, "and they, who went up to Rome as prisoners, took it as conquerors." The Christian soldier followed the symbol of his Saviour from victory to victory.

And gradually men came to see that war never had been forbidden by the Founder of our Holy Religion—that it was still a necessity, and something

more. They perceived that our Lord's mission was not to do away with evil, but to overcome evil with good ; not to destroy and abolish, but repair, enlighten, and reform. " Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Of course, if Christianity was held by all men in its integrity, there could be no more war, but it is the religion not of the many but of the few. Or if all nations recognized some one supreme authority, as we, individually, obey the laws and the magistrates of our country, then there might be universal peace. But the tyranny and the greed of those who disclaim all spiritual or moral obligations, and the jealousy of nations, altogether independent of each other, necessitate and justify both defensive and offensive war; defensive to resist, and offensive to punish. " When public interests are violated, when kingdoms and communities of men and princes are injured, there is no law to defend them, and, therefore, it must be by force ; force is the defensation of all laws; and when all laws are injured, there can be no way to reduce men to reason but by making them feel the evils of unreasonableness. And why should not justice be done," South asks, in his quaint straightforward way, " upon a company of malefactors, defending themselves with arms, as well as upon any particular thief or murderer, brought shackled and disarmed to punishment?" War becomes, in fact, the sole means of restoring peace, and this should be ever its main intent and ambition. " The true end of war " writes

Bishop Sanderson, "which only can warrant it lawful, we all know is the necessary preservation of a commonwealth in peace." You can no more have peace without soldiers, than you can have protection of property without a police.

And then, the forgotten but conclusive argument, that Christianity not only tolerates, but sanctions the profession of a soldier, was remembered and maintained, notably by that illustrious saint, Augustine. In his letter to Marcellinus, he writes, that if Christianity demanded the condemnation of all warfare, the soldiers of the New Testament, seeking for a knowledge of salvation, would have been directed by our Lord to throw aside their arms and altogether renounce their profession. But what do we find ?

What has God been pleased to tell us about soldiers in His blessed Book ? First, we meet with them in that wonderful scene on the banks of the Jordan, when a vast multitude were gathered from all quarters and from all classes, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, to hear a preacher ; when the two greatest nations of the world, the chosen people and the victorious Romans, were listening to one of the noblest and bravest of God's messengers, forgetting all their pride, and their learning, and their power, as he bade them repent of their sins and seek salvation in the coming Christ ; and when he ceased, there came forth from that strange crowd, as from a single heart, the cry, "Master, what shall we do ?" The people asked it, and their rulers asked it, and the

soldiers likewise demanded it of him, saying, "And what shall we do?" There was no word in disparagement of their vocation, only to show them how to exercise it rightly, and to give them simple rules. Do violence to no man, do not transgress the first requirements of your duty—be brave, but generous to a fallen foe. Boast not that thou canst do mischief. Leave off from wrath, and let go displeasure. *Accuse none falsely.* Let there be no wars of might against right. No false pretexts for concealing covetousness, for gaining larger dominions, greater power among the nations. *And be content with your wages.* Do your duty, because God has given it you to do. Fight for truth and justice, not for lucre.

But they, who obey the bidding of the messenger, have ever the approbation of the Master, who sends the message. And where shall we find a more beautiful example of faith, and of the true encouragement and reward which follow it, than in the history of that soldier, which is recorded in the seventh chapter of St. Luke's Gospel? He seems to have been one of those thoughtful, observant, large-hearted, unselfish men, whom God enlightens more and more with the knowledge of His truth. Though he was an alien to the commonwealth of Israel—a Gentile, and not a Jew—he was evidently a religious man. For we must remember that though the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit, and the carnal mind is enmity against God, yet He hath not left Himself without witness in any human heart; they

that have not the law, are a law unto themselves; and if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. In all false religions there is some truth, and they who follow the gleam, go upwards to a clearer light. And so this soldier, having loved what was best in the religion which he learned at Rome, having been "faithful in a few things," perceived, when he came to Judæa, that God had showed unto the Jews a more excellent way; and he loved them, we are told, and built them a synagogue; and when he met with truth itself in the Person of our blessed Lord, heard Him speak as never man spake, and saw Him do the works of His Father, he was prepared to acknowledge His Divine power in all humility: "Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof;" nor is it necessary, "for Thou canst do all things." "Speak the word only." "And Jesus said, I tell you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel."

And, again, in that tremendous scene on Calvary, when those unbelieving Jews, with a blindness blacker than the darkness which spread over the sufferings of the Redeemer, with hearts harder than the earth which quaked and the rocks which were rent, refused to acknowledge the Divine presence in the human form; when they who had murdered Him smote their breasts and left Him—it was a soldier's voice which made that brave proclamation, "Truly this *man* was the Son of God!"

One more example—a certain man in Cæsarea, called Cornelius, a centurion, an officer in command of a hundred men, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always, and to whom, when he was fasting, an angel appeared to announce that his prayer was heard, because “on the wings of fasting and alms, holy prayer infallibly mounts to Heaven.”

Is it not quite plain from these considerations that the military vocation is an indispensable necessity, in a world so largely influenced by pride, envy, and injustice; and that it must continue to be so until the Holy Spirit shall have dominion, absolute and universal, and overcome evil with good? More than this; have we not manifest proof that the life of a soldier, environed though it be with manifold temptations, and so in peril of fatal abuses, has within its reach the complete attainment of all those virtues and graces, which ennoble and consecrate manhood by fulfilling the designs of God?

Who are they who, in these days, are realizing their manhood? Who are they of whom England is justly proud? The men who in distant lands bear the burden and heat of the day, falling out of the ranks smitten with sunstroke, surprised and slain, risking their lives for a cause which they believe to be just? or they who, in the prime of their strength, are shooting pigeons out of traps for money—lounging about a club without one unselfish purpose?

It may perhaps be said, "You are selecting the best phase of war, and contrasting it with the worst phase of peace." But it seems to me fair to do this, because men can choose, and do choose, between them. The comparison suggests others. Shakespeare writes—

"Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front;
And now, instead of mounting barbèd steeds
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute."

Which is the nobler man? "Who can say that more sin is not committed every day in every capital of Europe than in the largest field of battle?"

Is it not in the stern school of war, rather than in the school of peace, that men the oftener learn the obligation and success of *Duty*? to accept it, to think of it, to speak of it, to perform it, as over all things else supreme? Is not *Duty* the light and the strength which makes the life of a soldier so grand and true? By reason as by revelation, by history, by our own experience, we are taught that, both as regards this world and the next, "the path of duty is the road to glory." Who wrote those words? He who wore the laurel crown among our poets, when he mourned the death of the foremost captain of his time, the Great General "who won a hundred fights, and never lost an English gun," whose one rule of life was *Duty*—Wellington.

It is recorded that on the night before his decisive

victory, on the eve of Waterloo, Lord Uxbridge, the chief of his staff, was very anxious as to his plans for the morrow, and ventured to ask the Duke for information as to his designs; the answer which he received was this, "My design is to conquer the enemy." But when the Duke saw that this did not satisfy, he added, "I cannot give you details, because these depend so much on the tactics of Buonaparte; but one thing is sure, Uxbridge, you and I will do our duty." And he is reported to have said to a clergyman who spoke despondingly of missions to the heathen, "What is that to you? What are your marching orders? 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'" Do your Duty.

So another of our heroes—

"Along the line the signal ran,
'England expects that every man
This day will do his Duty.'"

And where shall we find a more touching, teaching epitaph than this: "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his Duty"?

It may be urged—This sense of duty and service is not necessarily connected with Christianity, and is often found in those who never even heard of Christ. For example: Among the skeletons discovered by the excavators at Pompeii, that wicked city which, like Sodom and Gomorrah, and for the same sins, was destroyed by fire, there was one of a sentinel, standing erect on guard, while the positions of all around showed their attempts to escape and their agonies

of terror. The incident has been most impressively treated by a master of pictorial art, and the picture is in one of the public galleries at Liverpool. The soldier stands, with the lurid light from the flaming furnace of the volcano on his face, looking upwards, with the awful yet beautiful expression of one who has made up his mind to sacrifice life to duty. Under the picture is written, "Faithful unto death."

But Duty is religion ; there is faithful, prayerful, hopeful religion in that noble face ; there is the appeal to Divine justice, to the Helper of all that trust Him. And so with all true heroism. Men will brave danger and face death and fight fiercely from mere physical excitements—from despair, for revenge, or gain ; just as Napoleon, once called the Great, was for a time a mighty conqueror, though actuated only by a selfish ambition, cruel and sensual, and therefore in the end a failure ; but all the grand acts of calm and supreme bravery have been done by men of high and honest ambitions, from the religious instinct, from the love of that which was pure and sacred, and the hatred of that which was false and mean. "*Pro aris et focis*"—"For our Altars and Hearths"—was inscribed upon the banners of ancient valour.

"How can a man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the homesteads of his fathers
And the altars of his gods?"

And just in proportion as those principles of virtue and religion approximate to the truth, as God has

revealed it to us, so is the attainment of true heroism more or less possible; and to that soldier who is "a good soldier of Jesus Christ," it may be said, as history shows, "Many have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all."

For two reasons: he has the noblest example, the example of Christ, set before him; and he has Divine help wherewith to copy it, for he fights with the power, and in the presence, of his Chief. Regard, for instance, that quality, which is so admirable in all men, and so essential to the soldier that it is regarded as a matter of course—I mean *true courage*.

I say *true courage*, because there are counterfeits, imperfect presentations. You cannot be truly, consistently, unfailingly brave, unless you are brave from the highest principles. "It is not always from valour," writes the French cynic, "that men are valiant." There are hundreds who will do daring acts in moments of excitement, and with spectators to applaud, who are very cowards when they have to meet peril in cold blood, as we term it, with none to applaud, and no visible advantage, no prize, to gain. There is often no small amount of fear in that which looks like courage—fear of loss, and fear of ridicule. Men foremost in great and formidable enterprises have been known to show a childish dread of bodily pain; fearless leaders and magniloquent orators have seemed to lose heart and nerve at the first approach of sickness.

We want a truer courage than this. We want a

courage which is always brave—brave in difficulties, brave in defeat, brave in bereavements, brave in death. We want a courage which knows “what a noble thing it is to suffer and be strong.” From whom shall we learn it? From those brave soldiers of the Cross, who believed that to die was gain. Above all, from the great Captain of our salvation, who never turned to the right hand or to the left in His obedience to the will of His Father; who set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem, to Gethsemane, to Calvary; who rose up from that tremendous Agony, and said calmly to the Apostles, “Let us be going: lo, he is at hand that doth betray Me.”

And so through the ages, in all history, the greatest heroes of the world have been God’s heroes; the greatest soldiers, as a rule, have been soldiers of the Cross. From Cornelius to Charlemagne, who conquered and regenerated Western Europe; from Charlemagne to St. Louis, and our own royal soldier, “Harry the King,” receiving the sacrament before the victory at Agincourt; from those days to that great victory at Trafalgar, when Collingwood wrote, “The Almighty God, whose arm is strength, having of His great mercy been pleased to crown the exertions of His Majesty’s fleet with complete success; and in order that all praise and thanksgiving may be offered to Him, I have thought proper that a day should be appointed of general humiliation and thanksgiving, for imploring the forgiveness of our sins, and a continuation of that merciful goodness

without which the utmost efforts of man are nought ;” —from that time to this, the great warriors, as a rule, by land and sea, have been earnest Christians.

“Their praise is hymned by loftier harps than mine,
Yet one I would select from that great throng.”

One of the greatest Christian heroes that ever lived, Gordon ! Henceforth that name shall be spoken throughout the nations as one of the grandest and the sweetest in history. It shall sound like sublime music, like a glorious roll of drums, like a march played on silver trumpets, in the barrack and the camp, in the trench, the fort, and the zareba ; and in quiet homes, and in the sanctuary itself, it shall be “as a very lovely song of one who hath a pleasant voice, and playeth well on an instrument.” That name is a heritage and possession—a gift which “cannot be gotten for gold, neither can silver be weighed for the price thereof”—to England and to her Church for ever. When all the theories of a proud philosophy, the schemes of the sciolist, and the railing accusations of the sceptic are forgotten, that name shall declare to generations yet to come the triumphs of a simple faith, and shall speak to them of that Rock of Ages, against which “those raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame,” have tossed themselves in vain. When “the boast of heraldry, the pomp of power, and all that beauty, all that wealth, e’er gave,” has vanished, that name shall speak of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, of thrones in heaven, of an angel’s

glory, of the unsearchable riches of Christ. When men are in anxious quest of happiness, yearning for some noble purpose which shall give to life its true ambition, and to manhood its divine work—when they are seeking, where they cannot find; when money says, “It is not in me,” and pleasure says, “It is not in me,” and honour says, “I cannot give it,” and knowledge says, “I cannot learn it”—that name shall remind men that the kingdom of God is joy and peace, and that he, whose life is hid with Christ in God, can be quite happy when he is surrounded by his enemies, and all earthly hopes are gone. And when men’s hearts are failing them, as they are drawing nearer and nearer to death; when they cry with the Psalmist, “My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me, fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and a horrible dread hath overwhelmed me;”—then shall the example of Gordon teach how “perfect love casteth out fear.”

When it was said to him, “You know I may kill you for this?” “I do not fear death,” was the reply. “No difficulties,” wrote Archibald Forbes, “will abate his loyal courage; no thought of adversity will daunt his gallant heart. For him life has no ambition, and *death no terror*.” On the contrary, he desired, in God’s good time, to die. He told one of his most intimate friends that “he could not think of the joys of hereafter without longing for death.” “Oh for that home,” he sighed, “where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are

at rest; when the good fight will have been fought, the dusty labour finished, and the crown of life given; when our eyes will behold the only One that ever knew our sorrows and trials, and has borne with us in them all, soothing and comforting our weary souls! . . . We are nearing it day by day. 'I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, From henceforth happy are the dead that die in the Lord: even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours'—from troubles and tears, from sad sights of poor despairing bodies and sighing hearts, who find no peace in their prisons—from wars and strifes of words and judgments. It is a long, weary journey, but we are well on the way of it. The yearly milestones slip quickly by, and as our days so will our strength be. Perhaps, before another milestone is reached, the wayfarer may be in that glorious Home, beside of the River of Life, where there is no more care, nor sorrow, nor crying—at rest for ever with that kind and well-known Friend."

Whence had Gordon this marvellous power, abroad and at home—with nations and private persons, with subtle diplomatists and simple folk, with potentates and pashas, rulers and statesmen, and with ragged boys in the street? When he was living at Gravesend, those lads traced with chalk "God bless the Kernel" on the palings opposite his house; and Mr. Power tells us from Khartoum, "When he goes out-of-doors there are always crowds of Arabs—men and women—at the gate to kiss his feet. He is dictator

here, and it is wonderful that one man can have such power over two hundred thousand people. They ask him to touch their children to cure them. They call him father and saviour. He is, I believe, the greatest and best man of this century."

Whence this influence? No man can read his history without the conviction that the source and support of his power was faith—not the miserable unscriptural counterfeit which says, "I believe, and that's enough;" which says, "I went to that prayer-meeting, I sat down to hear that sermon, a rejected sinner, and I came home an accepted saint;" but the only true faith—the "*faith which worketh by love.*" This brought him into spiritual communion with God. He *knew* that God was with him and in him, and "this," he said, "gave him superhuman strength."

How did he keep that presence in his soul? that faith? that love? By *prayer*. "Ask God," he says, "to show you Himself, for Christ's sake, and He will soon do so." There were times when a white handkerchief was to be seen spread before the entrance of Gordon's tent. No man, however high his position or important his errand, was to intrude while it remained. The General was on his knees in prayer.

His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in searching the Holy Scriptures. He could truly say, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "Bibles abound," he said, "but when we consider that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God—for instruction in righteousness—are they read

and studied as they ought to be? It is said that man shall live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God—we don't forget the daily meals for the body, but we starve our souls. May it not be the reason," he asks, "that there are so many differences of opinion on religion that commentaries and other writings of men are studied instead of the Word of God? '*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures.*'"

Again, Gordon sought and found in deeds of mercy that Saviour who will one day say to him, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these My brethren"—My brethren in sorrow and want and pain—"ye have done it unto Me." And so we read that his house at Gravesend was school and almshouse and hospital in turn. The troubles of all interested him alike. The poor, the rich, the unfortunate, were always welcome. Many children he rescued from the streets, cleansed, clothed, fed, and taught them. We hear of him—this ruler of nations, this mighty man of valour—finding a poor woman, sick and starving, in a miserable home, with his own hands lighting a fire, preparing and administering food. And Mr. Hake relates of him how, when travelling in the Soudan, he distributed grain to the hungry and gave employment to the needy, the poor negroes crowding round him. Yes, "the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." He kept the child's heart in the brave man's breast. For his love was real, the first fruit of the Holy Spirit within him.

It was not that sham "charity" which gives pence to the needy and spends pounds in self-indulgence, grudges a shilling to an offertory and loses five pounds on a race; not that poor sentimental charity which sits by the fireside and sighs over the sorrows which it reads in the newspapers, but gives nothing beyond the sigh; not that ostentatious charity which does its alms to be seen of men, which loves the praise of men rather than the praise of God, and makes the giver, as Bishop Wilson says, a greater beggar than he to whom he gives. His was not that sentimental charity which can only be induced to interest itself in some special case of picturesque affliction—the pretty little orphan, the consumptive maiden, the silver-headed old man. No, his love, like his Master's, was *for all*—his heart was with the poor. Think of him, when you give your alms to-day for the Hospital and Schools at Wimbledon.

But it may surprise many to be told that the noble life which Gordon lived on earth—in the world, but not of it—derived its grand power and purpose from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Listen to Gordon's words: "I think that by taking the Communion in a proper frame—that is, with desire to sin no more, to be holy, to be at peace with all men—in some peculiar way we are strengthened by a communication from our Lord, and that a far closer union arises than from any other means. The effect of taking into our material body His flesh and blood

is this: Christ was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil, or flesh; therefore the incorporation of His flesh and blood into our material body must tend to the same end.

“It is remarkable to contrast the Divine command to Adam, ‘Thou shalt not eat,’ with the Divine command to Adam’s progeny, ‘Take, eat.’ Adam’s disobedience to God’s simple command *not* to eat brought sin and death. Obedience to Jesus Christ’s simple command, ‘Eat,’ this gives righteousness and heaven. By eating came death to the body, by eating comes life to the soul.

“And hence it is that so many Christians are low-spirited, and limp through the world! They find themselves weighed down by the corruptions of their bodies; they heap service on service; they visit the poor; but they disregard the Lord’s words—their bodies are not acted on by their partaking in faith of the body and blood of Christ.

“I cannot repeat it too often, that as the body was poisoned by the eating of a fruit, so it must be cured from its malady by absorbing an antidote. Why is the Sacrament neglected?”

Soldiers, be assured of this, that the ascensions of courage are the ascensions of faith, and that the bravest are purest in heart.

It is a hard battle which we have all to fight, but it is fought in the presence of the great Captain of our salvation, and we shall hear, if we will only listen, His precious encouragements.

Let us pray, my brothers, "Lord, increase our faith," that we may evermore rejoice in that holy Presence, and may remember always our solemn promise, when we were enlisted at our Baptism into the army of Jesus, that we would never be ashamed to confess, not with our lips only, but in our lives, the faith of Christ crucified, manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto our life's end.

What would you say of the soldier who deserted from the ranks on the approach of the enemy, or who betrayed his comrades for a bribe? What think you of "the children of Ephraim, who, being harnessed and carrying bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle"?

We talk of men disgracing their profession, their regiment, their uniform; what, then, shall we say of those who, called to be God's heroes, saints, and angels, disobey, forsake the Captain of their salvation, join the armies of Antichrist, and perish, like Balaam, fighting with the troops of Midian against the people of the Lord?

We must "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," and he that endureth shall be saved. The chariots and horses of the Syrians surround Dothan, but "the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels," and "they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

My brothers, the last bugle-call will soon summon

the armies of the world, whether they have fought for good or evil, conquerors and cowards, for the great march past before the throne of God. For it is written, "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." Oh, think what it will be, if it makes the heart rejoice with a righteous joy to win the prizes of earth—think what it will be to have won, through Christ, the glorious prizes of God!

They tell us, who saw, that no more impressive spectacle was ever seen in England than when our beloved Queen publicly thanked and decorated her soldiers on their return from the Crimean War. Think, then, what it will be, when a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand shall be given to him that overcometh, to every true soldier of the Cross; and the redeemed shall come with singing unto Zion, and this anthem shall ring through universal space, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever!"

XVI.

WHO IS A GENTLEMAN ?

WHO is a gentleman ? What is a gentleman ? There never was a time when this title was so commonly claimed and conceded. Who has a right to it ? What makes a gentleman ?

First, we hear of “gentlemen by *birth*,” and “men of gentle blood.” There is no such being as a gentleman by birth. The father may be a gentleman, and the mother “a lady,” but it does not follow that their son will be a gentleman. He has many advantages—“the lot is fallen unto him in a fair ground, and he hath a goodly heritage ;” and it should be a great educational help to be surrounded from the first with so much that is bright and beautiful, both in nature and art, with things pleasant to the eye and good for food, unknown in the dwellings of the poor. But we know that, while in innumerable instances all these refinements have failed to refine, there have been examples, also countless, of men who have been born amid the drear discomforts of poverty, but have won for themselves, by their conduct and their

culture, by patient continuance in well-doing, the character of true gentlemen.

Some assume that men are made gentlemen by their education. That would be quite true, if by education was intended the complete development and discipline of our physical, mental, and spiritual life; but it means too often, when it is regarded as the process for making a gentleman, a school in which the boy sent there will have many companions from grades and classes higher than his own, and, thus associated, learning the same lessons, habits, and games, will be qualified hereafter for what is called "the best society," and made a gentleman.

It has been said not seldom by those who had themselves but scant opportunities of scholarship, that, having acquired the means, they will give their sons the benefits which they never received, "the best"—by which they mean the most fashionable—"education" which is to be had, and so make them gentlemen.

No public schools, no universities, no study of elegant literature, no intellectual attainments, no accomplishments, no titled playmates, can confer this gift. They may make men learned or athletic; they may impart the pleasant manners, the tone, the dress, the appearance, which are supposed to indicate the gentleman; but the real elements, the truthfulness which cannot lie, the uprightness which will not stoop, the courtesy which considers all, the honour which cannot be bribed, the command of the passions,

the mastering of the temper,—these can only be learned from God.

Sir Walter Scott said that “he had read the most accomplished authors of the past, and had known the most distinguished men of his day, but that he had learnt higher sentiments from the lips of poor, uneducated persons, speaking simple thoughts, than he had met with out of his Bible.” Bishop Christopher Wordsworth declared that he learned more in poor men’s homes and from sick folks than from all the books in his library.

Some arrogate to themselves the title of gentlemen because they are rich, and because they think it may be bought with money, by making a display, by living in large houses, with costly furniture, and great gardens, and numerous servants, chariots and horses, fine clothes and ornaments, pictures and plate. “But what is the good,” it has been asked, “of gold-plate and pewter principles?” If these adjuncts be all they have to rely upon, they will deceive none but themselves. The baser metal will continually show itself through the thin covering of gold; the coarse wood will be seen through the cracks in the gay veneer. There will ever be the clumsiness and the heaviness visible to the eye, and the discord and the dulness audible to the ear, which distinguish the artificial from the real, the false from the true.

“The rank is but the guinea’s stamp,
The man’s the gowd for a’ that.”

What are all titles but mere verbiage, the barren

coinage current among men, the tinsel clink of compliment, if there is nothing "royal," "noble," "gracious," "excellent," "right honourable," "reverend," in him who wears them? They are grand and just when, as the good French precept bids, *Noblesse oblige*—when they suggest obligations, and high ambitions, and holy efforts; but, without these, they only invite rebuke and ridicule. Our Laureate has beautifully rendered the Latin line, "*Nobilitas sola est atque unica virtus*"—

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me
'Tis noble only to be good;
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood."

Money can no more buy happiness than it can buy character.

What I wish to demonstrate is this—that no man can be a true gentleman, whatever his birth, education, and income, who is actuated only by selfish motives; who looks to the world around him for estimates and rules and rewards, and has not considered who are the true gentlemen and noblemen in the eyes of the all-seeing God. No man can do anything really great and good, gentle and manly in unison, so long as he cares only for himself, so long as he disregards God's laws and directions, and does not copy the model which Christ has set before him.

Hard upon nineteen hundred years ago, there lived in the world the manliest, noblest, gentlest Being—

the only *Perfect* Man, Gentleman, Nobleman, whom this world ever saw. He not only united in Himself all that is best in manhood and womanhood—wisdom and strength, truth, courage, generosity, gentleness, compassion, purity—but He made it possible for us to learn “the mind that was in Christ.” He was not only the perfect Example of unselfishness, but He won for us, and is ready to bestow on us, the power of conquering self—self-sacrifice.

“Learn of Me,” He says; “for I am meek and lowly in heart.” And only those who learn the gentleness of Christ are gentlemen.

It is the Christ-like spirit which induces us to work for others, not only because the sense of our own weakness, which it teaches us, creates a sympathy with them, not only because the power of our own temptations makes us lenient to the tempted, not only because respect for our own convictions make us respect the convictions of others, not only because our joy and peace in believing impels us to tell others that we have found the Messiah; but because we know that every soul is alike precious to Him who died for all, and that in loving them we are loving Him, and in bearing one another’s burdens are fulfilling the law of Christ.

Hence it is that so many of our mere worldly friendships are so insincere and brief—bruised reeds, which, if we lean on them, run into the hand and pierce it. They are so largely selfish. They are too often formed from fancy, from impulse, from similarity

of tastes and pursuits, without reference to principles, to character. Men will eat and drink and be merry with you so long as your company pleases them, or your influence promotes their interests, but will leave you from mere caprice, or upon the advent of adversity. Christ said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you;" and the true Christian is the friend that loveth at all times, and the brother born for adversity.

The gentleness of Christ, granted to prayer, communicated through the sacraments, taught by the Scriptures, realized by deeds and words of love—the gentleness of Christ makes gentlemen; and any Christian, the poorest, the weakest, the lowest as to earthly possessions and power, may win for himself this noble designation. Bishop Wilson describes "the true character of a gentleman" to be "one who has a good estate and authority, and makes use of these to promote the glory of God, the good of his country, and to help those that are in need." But a man may be a gentleman, in the highest sense of the word, who has neither estate nor authority.

"Alas! 'tis far from russet frieze
To silk and satin gowns;
But I doubt if God made like degrees
'Twixt courtly hearts and clowns."

The Lord of glory lay in a manger, lived in a poor cottage, and earned bread by the sweat of His face; blessed with His praise and promise of reward the offerings of the poor, the widow's mite which she offered for the Temple service, the cup of cold

water given in the name of a disciple, to tell men that it might be always so. He chose unlearned and ignorant men to teach and convert the world, and men who had no money to do miracles ("Silver and gold," said the fisherman, "have I none; in the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk"), to show us it might be ever so.

And who that knows the poor has not seen again and again that it is so? What parish priest, for example, has not seen a thousand beautiful examples, among his people, of the truest manliness, manliness under suffering; the truest gentleness, gentleness amid so much that is hard and harsh; the truest nobility, where the surroundings have been so vile? Who has not found, from time to time, in the meanest cottage the truest courtesy, the most tender and delicate consideration for others, the most sweet, long-suffering patience?

Ah, it's easy to be what the world calls manly when we are hale and strong, easy to be gentle when there's nothing to vex, to be generous when there are abundant means; but to be brave and cheerful and unselfish when there is want and pain, that comes only from the gentleness of Christ. It is easy to sigh about the sorrows of others, to send inquiries about the sick, to look in and leave a tract, or a sum we shall never miss; but to watch by the bed, to wait upon them while others sleep, to have them in your thoughts and prayers, that is to be like Jesus of Nazareth. For it is written, "Blessed is he

that *considereth* the poor and needy"—has them in his heart.

Of course, neither poverty nor riches makes or mars our character. The angels took Lazarus to Paradise, when he died, not because he was poor, but because he was patient, faithful, hopeful in his poverty; and evil spirits hurried Dives to a place of torment, not because he was rich, but because he was sensual and unmerciful. Abraham, and Hezekiah, and Matthew, and Zacchæus, and Joseph of Arimathea, and Cornelius consecrated their wealth to God. He who has the gentleness of Christ keeps his integrity whether he be rich or poor. Christianity treats all men alike; there is the same sympathy, the same strength, the same conditions and requirements, for all; in exact proportion as their need, is the help given when it is sought; as their day so is their strength; every Christian man must look to Christ, as the Author and Finisher of his faith, and must follow His example *here*, or he cannot share His glory *hereafter*.

In all the civilized races, attempts have been made by the most thoughtful and refined philosophers to define a gentleman—as the Greek teacher Aristotle, *τῆράγωνος ἀνευ ψογού*—

“Standing foursquare to every wind that blows”—

and the Latin poet Horace, of the man, “*Integer vitæ scelerisque purus* ;” all agreed he must be blameless, “*sans peur et sans reproche*”—upright and undefiled; no vicious man could be a gentleman. But when we pass from human philosophy to Divine

revelation, the ideal is exalted at once, and the definition more minute and clear. "Even he that leadeth an incorrupt life, and doeth the thing that is right, and speaketh the truth from his heart. He that hath used no deceit in his tongue, nor done evil to his neighbour, and hath not slandered his neighbour. He that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes, and maketh much of them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not, though it were to his own hindrance. He that hath not given his money upon usury, nor taken reward against the innocent."

All these aspirations and inspirations were but typical and prophetic of the perfect example of the gentleness of Christ, and of the Christian gentleman. *In Him* we have the presentation of all that is pure and beautiful in manhood, and *through Him* we have the power to attain it. Nay, as the Apostle says, He is to be formed in us. The priests of Buddha tell their disciples, "Think of Buddha, and ye will become like Buddha." We say—not we, but God—think of Christ, pray to Christ, seek Christ, and He will come to you, and make His abode with you, and His gentleness shall be your gentleness, and men shall take notice that you have been with Jesus, and ye shall say, "As for me, I will behold Thy presence in righteousness: and when I awake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it."

Wherefore it follows, that the only true gentleman

is he who is striving, by the grace of God, in all things to resemble Christ. Whoever hath this ambition and hope purifieth himself, as He is pure. He seeks to form and fashion himself, his life and conversation, his body, his mind, his senses, his faculties, his estate and occupations, after this Divine model.

The members of his body—the best member that he hath—he will conform to the gentleness of Jesus, that his conversation may be such as becometh the gospel of Christ. He will remember His words—“By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned;” “Swear not at all.” He will not only put a watch upon his mouth, and keep the door of his lips from all words that may do hurt—from all obscene and profane words, from all harsh, bitter, unmerciful words, from all words that are false and untrue—but, like the Divine Master, he will speak gentle words of sympathy and compassion, solace and hope, of peace and good will towards men. Ah! friends, how much might we do in this spirit to brighten our own hearts, and to increase the happiness of our fellow-men, by gentle, kindly words! A word of tenderness, encouragement, fitly spoken in season, how good it is!

“It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.”

The soft answer that turneth away wrath. Christ's own words, spoken into mourners' ears, “Not dead,

but sleepeth;" "Thy brother shall rise again;" "I am the Resurrection and the Life;" "Weep not;" "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

And if we have learned the gentleness of Christ, our speech will not only be kind to others, but of them. Learning this mind which was in Him, and remembering His Divine utterance, we shall put away from us all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, with all malice; and we shall be kind one to another, tender-hearted. When we hear evil of others, instead of denouncing and saying, "Let the sentence of guiltiness proceed against him, and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more," would it not be more charitable to say, "Perhaps he did not do it; I hope that he is innocent: and if he be guilty, I know not how terribly he was tempted; I know not that he may not have repented bitterly, and found pardon from God. This I do know—Christ died for him, Christ pleads for him, still loves and yearns to save him"? "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged."

A charitable silence, it has been well said, is better than an uncharitable truth. "I have often repented," a good man said, "of having spoken, hardly ever of having kept silence." "I make it a rule," Bishop Beveridge writes, "never to praise a man to his face, or blame him behind his back."

"Speak what good thou knowest of thy brother to all men; but if he trespass against thee, go and tell

him his fault between him and thee alone." What misery may be wrought by one slanderous word, in families, neighbourhoods !

More than this, the Christian gentleman will not be satisfied with the submission of one member to the law of Christ, while another is rebellious and disobedient, but will keep under the whole body and bring it into subjection, knowing that he who shall offend in one point is guilty of all. "The light of the body is the eye," and that must glow with the pure light of love, and not with the lurid fire of lust; with the sunshine of peace, and not with the forked fire of malice and revenge.

And as the tongue is given us for God's glory—"I will sing and give praise;" for our own necessities—"If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God;" and for the edification of our fellow-men—"Wherefore comfort ye one another with these words;" so the eye looks heavenward in adoration.

"And while the mute creation downward bends
Its gaze, and to its earthly mother tends,
Man looks aloft, and with enraptured eyes
Beholds his bright inheritance, the skies."

Looks heavenward, and sees how those heavens
declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth
His handiwork.

"Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins."

Earthward upon all that is so fairly, so fearfully, so wonderfully made, with awe and admiration, ever praying, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may see Thy wondrous things;" earthward upon all that is so sad and sinful, with tears from the conduits of the heart; and then inward, that, not looking for the mote that is in our brother's eye, but for the beam in our own eye, we may cast out that which doth offend the Eye of our heavenly Father—the Eye which is in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

No Christian gentleman will be subdued by the mere animal appetites, but will be the master, and not the slave, of his passions. He may trip and fall, but his degradation shall bring the shame, the remorse, the humility, which God hath seen, to a higher place of security, so that he may cling more closely to the Cross, and then more earnestly may serve the Crucified.

No Christian gentleman can be a fornicator, glutton, drunkard, or gambler, because he has been told by his Saviour and his Judge that adulteries and fornications defile a man, and because he knows that there shall in no wise enter anything which defileth into the new Jerusalem; because he is warned by the same Divine authority, "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day overtake you unawares;" because he is commanded not to covet nor desire other men's goods, that no man shall go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter.

No gentleman can be a glutton and a drunkard. Under the Mosaic Law, it was ordered that if parents brought before the elders of the city a son who was hopelessly rebellious, gluttonous, and drunken, he should be stoned with stones unto death; and under the New Covenant we are told that "if an evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of; and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites"—"there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

No gentleman will deliberately "put an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains"—the reason which raises him above the lower animals, and so degrade himself infinitely below them. No one who has any self-respect would incapacitate himself from his ordinary employments, and make himself contemptible before God and man.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." No gentleman will forget St. Paul's words, "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid."

I hope to speak to you concerning gambling and betting in a future address, and therefore I will only say now that, while I admire the horse and his rider,

and see no harm, but rather a manly recreation, in the race, it seems to me the manifest duty of every Christian gentleman to abstain from the practice, and from the fellowship of those who practise those evil habits of gambling and betting, which have been so disastrous in the ruin, physical and financial, moral and spiritual, of their fellow-men ; which have tarnished noble names, and alienated ancestral homes and estates ; which have ended in the grave of the suicide, and in the sorrows of broken hearts, in exile, in asylum, and in jail.

A true Christian gentleman will not only govern his senses—refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile ; he will not only pray God to turn away his eyes lest they behold vanity, to strengthen the hands that hang down, and to guide his feet into the way of peace ; he will cultivate his mind, that he may make it a worthier offering to Him who gave it ; he will store it with such information as may help him to do the work which God has assigned to him more worthily and usefully. He will remember that it is his duty to love God with all his mind, as well as with all his heart, and that he must offer and present all that he has as a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Him.

A gentleman will not disuse God's gifts in idleness and sloth ; he cannot abuse them in mere frivolity ; he does not seek knowledge merely for knowledge sake, to be wiser than his fellows, to gain admiration, popularity, position, influence, income ; he desires to

use it to God's glory and the good of his fellow-men. While he instructs, interests, enlivens his mind with all that is true, thoughtful, sincere, in literature, he despises that which is lascivious, as much as that which is sceptical—the French novel making a romance or a comedy of deadly sin, and the English novel revelling in murder, condoning heresy, and suggesting all phases of unbelief.

While he delights in true humour, because God has given us our sense and power of humour for our constant refreshment, and as a great means, if wisely used, whereby he may dissuade men from the meanness and misery of vice, he remembers that there are two kinds of satire—that there is both the use and abuse of wit.

“There is a wit,” wrote an ancient master of eloquence and composition, Cicero, “which is kindly, pleasant, benevolent, and another which is bitter, malignant, cruel.”

A Christian gentleman takes care of his possessions, be they great or small. He permits no waste—generous to others, economical towards himself. He does not gamble nor bet.

He incurs no liability which he cannot discharge, no debt which he cannot pay. He is true and just in all his dealings. “Owe no man anything, but to love one another.”

A gentleman is courteous to all. With a due regard for those in authority, because the powers that be are ordained of God, he has yet higher motives for

his courtesy. In prince or peasant he sees an immortal soul. Christ so regarded all, and treated all with the utmost consideration and tenderness. He encouraged all; He praised, but He never flattered. He never feared to denounce evil, wherever it showed itself. He was just the same in the temple, in the palace of the high priest, as He was with the wayside beggar, or in the cottage home of the fishermen.

Always considerate for others, always tender-hearted, always yearning to forgive and bless; always the Good Shepherd, gathering the lambs in His arms, and carrying them in His bosom, and gently leading those that were with young.

There was only one class of men who evoked His righteous indignation—the shams and hypocrites, the scribes and Pharisees, whose religion was all talk and self-conceit; who for a pretence made long prayers; who stood outside the door of heaven, not entering, and hindering others. They presented themselves to the world as saints; they had a form of godliness; they gave tithe of anise and mint and cummin; but, just as so many now assume the title, the appearance, the manners of gentlemen, it was only a profane parody, a forgery, and fraud.

Hear, then, the sum of the whole matter.

It is in the power of every one of you to be included in the number of God's gentlemen. They are not made by pedigrees, titles, or estates, by learning or accomplishments. The only perfect Gentleman lived

in a poor cottage, and worked with saw and plane. They are made by that faith in His love and in His spiritual Presence which constrains them to take up their cross and follow Him, in all such works as He has prepared for them to walk in. They hear His voice, and they believe that their sinful bodies are made clean by His Body, and their souls washed through His most precious Blood.

God's gentleman ! St. Paul describes him :—
“Abhorring evil, cleaving to that which is good, kindly affectionate, not slothful in business, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer, rejoicing with them that rejoice, and weeping with them that weep, not minding high things, but condescending to men of low estate, not wise in his own conceits, as much as lieth in him living peaceably with all men.”

Who shall dare to plead in the day of judgment that he tried heartily to keep these rules and failed ; that it was never in his power to be a new creature in Christ, to be one of God's gentlemen ?

XVII.

GAMBLING AND BETTING.*

WHEN I travelled, not long ago, with a number of betting men, and one of them looked up from his newspaper, in which I saw afterwards a programme of the Church Congress to be held at Manchester, and when he inquired angrily, "What can a parson"—he prefixed an epithet which seemed to me to be appropriate only to a clergyman who had cut himself in the act of shaving—"what can a parson know about gambling and betting? What can 'e know about an 'oss?"—I had no time to reply to the question, because the train was just stopping at a station, and the inquirer left it for the racecourse.

My answer would have been that, in this matter, we parsons have a very large and sad experience. If, in our "sallet days, when we were green in judgment," at college, and in society, we ourselves escaped without harm, we can all of us remember instances in which

* This address, first given at the Manchester Church Congress, was afterwards published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and is inserted by permission.

the evil spirit of gambling and betting not only separated very friends, long and happy attachments broken for ever on the night when one lost to the other more than he knew how to pay, but, far worse than this, we have in sorrowful remembrance many companions and contemporaries, of whom it might have truly been said, when they "went upon the turf," that it had been better for them had they gone under it—noblemen, gentlemen, men of honour and integrity, but gradually contaminated by the atmosphere in which they moved, first dupes and then deceivers.

And ever since those days, in our intercourse with all grades of society, with all sorts and conditions of men, we, whose vocation is to warn against the temptations and fascinations of sin, to expose its delusions, and to oppose its power; we, who are distressed to hear so often the history of human weakness, of human sorrow and shame; we, who are permitted to rejoice so often when we minister to minds diseased the only true consolation and cure; we, always and everywhere, are witnesses of the disastrous injury, temporal and spiritual, the misery and disgrace, which are wrought by gambling and betting.

Wherefore, when I am asked what the parson knows of these things, I reply that we speak that which we know, and testify that we have seen when we affirm—

1. That gambling and betting are directly opposed to the teaching of Divine revelation, of the Law and the Gospel alike; and that they prevent a man from

fulfilling the gracious purpose for which God made and redeemed him.

2. That being accompanied, as a rule with rare exceptions, by other vices—extravagance, sensual indulgence,* and idleness—they detract from our national honour, our industrial prosperity, and our domestic happiness.

3. That the excuses made are contemptible, and that—

4. It is the duty of all Christians, patriots, and philanthropists to denounce this evil, and to unite in prayerful, thoughtful, practical efforts to suppress and to expel it.

First, then, I maintain that gambling and betting are directly opposed to those revelations of the Divine will by which we are taught our duty to God and to each other.

It has been said that men may gamble and bet without breaking any one of the Ten Commandments; but the author of this statement would be hopelessly perplexed to illustrate it by an example. We shall find, on the contrary, if we go through the Decalogue, referring to our experience, and remembering the

* "Nearly six years ago I prepared, with the help of the late governor, Major Fulford, a 'drink census' of Stafford Gaol. The result, when tabulated, went to show that, in a greater or less degree, no fewer than ninety-two per cent. owed their imprisonment to habits of intemperance. But I record my settled conviction, arrived at after much inquiry, that of this ninety-two per cent. *very considerably more than half* contracted the habit of drink from the previously acquired habit of gambling."—"Betting and Gambling," Rev. C. Goldney, Chaplain.

public records, that these habits are fraught with special temptations to transgress those Commandments, one and all.

Consider those of the first table, which command our entire obedience to Him who has declared Himself to be "a jealous God," and who says to every one of us, "My son, give Me thine heart, and set up no idol there. Reverence My name, and when thou hast done thy six days of *work*—for this is My immutable law, 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread'—then keep the seventh as a day of holy rest, and 'delight thyself in the Lord.'"

Is there not proof, as abundant as it is sad, that the fascinations and excitements of habitual gambling and betting lure men's hearts from this holy allegiance and absorb them in things of the earth, earthy? May not the prophet's words be applied to them that they are "mad upon their idols"—idols of silver and of gold?

Do they keep the door of their lips? Is the tongue, given to us for prayer and praise, for wise and merciful words, the best member that they have? or is it an unruly evil, loving to speak all words that may do hurt? Is it used as by those who believe that He will come to be their Judge, who has said, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned;" "Swear not at all"?

"Six days shalt thou labour." What labour, what honest, manly work, honourable to themselves or

beneficial to their fellow-men, is done by those who gamble and bet? Do they keep the Christian Sabbath, the Lord's Day, holy? Is the betting-book exchanged for the Bible? Are the cards and dice put away? Would the men who run horses for the Prix de Paris, who go to see or bet upon the race, have any scruples as to the Prix de Manchester or the Prix de Sandown taking place on the Sunday, if others made no objection?

Passing on to the second table of the Law, to those Commandments which teach us our duty to our neighbour, to the Fifth Commandment, "Honour thy father and thy mother," I appeal to your own observation, it may be to your painful experience, how many sons have been led to disobedience, to that spirit of discontent in which the prodigal said to his father, "Give me my portion of goods;" how much enmity, privation, and disgrace have been brought into homes, where there had been only love and plenty and fair fame, by those first temptations to gamble and to bet? And these vices seem almost always to induce a selfishness which eliminates the purer affections. Some few years ago a gentleman, going through the workhouse at Sheffield, was greatly surprised to see among the inmates an old woman whom he had known in a comfortable home of her own. He expressed his sorrowful astonishment to the master, and added, "I know for a fact that one of her sons is earning at this time between £4 and £5 a week." On this information the master sought and found the

man referred to, and when he remonstrated with him, this was the reply he received, "If you had lost £40 on that cursed handicap last week, you'd be none so keen about paying for other folks!"

But our righteous indignation gives place to far more powerful emotions, and the spirit within us is oppressed and awed, as we repeat the words, "Thou shalt do no murder," and think of the number of those broken hearts, in which life has not only been embittered, enfeebled, and gradually crushed out by fierce excitements, by terrible anxieties, and by actual want; but in an agony of wild despair has been ended here by those who could no longer endure it. How often have we read in our newspapers (there were two instances last year in the same month), "Suicide of a betting man"! Frith's picture of the youth with the pistol in his hand is no mere sensational fancy. The number of deaths at Monte Carlo may have been exaggerated, but there were two, if not three, when I was in the neighbourhood not many years ago. Of one case I had full particulars. The purser of a Russian man-of-war, anchored in the bay of Villa Franca, came ashore and went to the gambling-room at Monte Carlo. At first he won, then he lost, staked a large sum belonging to the ship, lost that, and destroyed himself. More recently, seeing in one of the most popular and reliable provincial newspapers that there had been fifteen suicides within six months, I wrote to the editor, whom I knew personally, and asked him kindly to send me proof

of the information. He wrote immediately to his correspondent, a Frenchman resident at Nice, and received from him and forwarded to me minute details of the last four miserable deaths. A young officer in the gendarmerie, having lost 12,000f., shot himself in the grounds of the gaming-house, first in the throat and then in the head; a man of sixty-five, having after many days of play lost all he had, 55,000f., hung himself in one of the kiosques of the garden; a lady, the mother of a family, also lost all, and threw herself from the fourth story of the hotel in which she lodged; and a Captain Wolff, of the Prussian Infantry, shot himself in his bedroom. The four sous which they found in his purse dispelled all doubt as to the impulse of this ruined man. Nevertheless, ladies and gentlemen go from Cannes and elsewhere to this Aceldama and stake their Napoleons, "just for the fun of the thing," side by side with those who may recover their *rouleaux*, but never again their reputation; and it was well said by an old man to a youth, boasting in a railway carriage that he had been to Monte Carlo and brought back thirty Napoleons, "You don't know, sir, whose money you have won; your thirty pieces may have belonged to a suicide, and so be the price of blood."

On Commandment VII., "Thou shalt not commit adultery," I will only say that it has been publicly affirmed, the writer giving as his authority the police employed in the neighbourhood of St. John's Wood, on racecourses, and elsewhere, that a large proportion

of "kept women," as they are called, are supported by those who gamble and bet, and that a majority of the most important cases brought into the divorce court have a similar association.

Repeating Commandment VIII., "Thou shalt not steal," I think you will endorse my conviction, that the gambler who cheats and the betting man who bets on a certainty are mere robbers, although the professional thieves would hardly condescend to recognize them as worthy of enrolment in their society, seeing that they have neither the courage of the burglar nor the adroit activity of the prig. These fifth-rate petty larceners are not many nor dangerous, as they are soon found out and relegated to the mixed company of card-sharpers, thimble-riggers, welshers, and other uncertificated poachers who hover around the outskirts of the great preserves; but there are numerous "sportsmen," having licences to kill game within the covert, who have no scruples about shooting a hen-pheasant in a tree or a hare on her seat, if they are sure that nobody will see. I mean that there are many men who gamble and bet who will take every advantage, short of actual dishonesty, to overreach others. So far from being condemned, they are lauded and envied for their ingenuity, and that which the severe moralist might denounce as a conspiracy to defraud is not seldom designated as "a good thing," and the good men who arrange this little game and complete it—I beg pardon, "bring it off," "pull it through"—are admired by those whom

they have not "let in" as wise and happy in their deed. We inferior mortals, who cannot raise our appreciations to these sublime heights of sagacity, are apt to depreciate, as dullards do, and to make some such comments as that of the negro speaking of a brother black, "I shall not call 'im a tief, but if I were a chicken and saw that darkie a loafing round, I'd roost high—dat's all."

If gambling and betting are not actual peculations, they most assuredly suggest and induce them. I have made inquiries and read reports from governors and chaplains of prisons, some of which I have personally visited, the last at Chatham, one of the largest in the kingdom, and these officers are unanimous in their declarations that an infinite number of prisoners, convicted for the first time of false entries, forgeries, and actual theft, have attributed their guilt to the results of gambling and betting. The Rev. Mr. Goldney, chaplain of Her Majesty's Prison, whose evidence I have already quoted, made this statement at the meeting of the Lichfield Diocesan Conference held in November last—

"We are able to fill one of those spacious corridors in Stafford Prison with young men of the clerk and accountant class, their ages mostly varying from sixteen to twenty-three, and they receiving salaries of from £40 to £70 per annum. In what I say I do but act as their spokesman, summing up the evidence with which they have supplied me, and so fulfilling a promise made to one of them but yesterday. *It is*

betting and gambling, of which they are the victims, rather than of drink and immorality, though these latter may be described as accessories both before and after the fact."

So true is it that "he who maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent," and that "he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool."

Of Commandment IX., "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," in its connection with gambling and betting, it may suffice to recall the evidence given on a recent notable occasion, and in several similar trials, by the betting fraternity. The variegated testimony, upon oath, of these witnesses, confuses the mind of the reader. He is perplexed, for example, in the last case brought into court, to know whether the person chiefly concerned is "a good jockey who would not, or a bad jockey who could not, win;" and he is yet more bewildered to understand how, in either case, he had accumulated (as it was reported) the sum of £150,000.

Nor will you ask for arguments as regards Commandment X., "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, . . . *nor anything that is his*," to prove the very simple fact that if there were none to covet their neighbour's silver or gold, his banknotes, cheques, or I.O.U.'s, there would be none to gamble or to bet.

But religion is no mere code of prohibitory and penal laws. It teaches us not only to fear and to

despise that which God has forbidden, but to find our happiness in doing that which He has commanded, and in loving one another, even as He has loved us. If, under the older covenant, men were not only warned to escape from the curses of Ebal, but to enjoy the blessings of Gerizim; if they were commanded by the Levitical law not to defraud but to love their neighbours, not only to eschew evil but to do good; how much more persuasively are we invited by the Gospel, how much more powerfully are we impelled by the Spirit of Christ, to that charity which worketh no ill to its neighbour, but rejoices to provide things honest in the sight of all men and to do them good!

Wherefore it is manifestly false to say that they who habitually gamble and bet break no commandments; and they have far more consistent and plausible arguments who decline to be tested by Christian principles, because they do not believe them.

The latter assert that so long as they do not transgress the laws of the State, they have a right to do what they will with their own. We have no king but Cæsar. But "no man liveth to himself," and though you may leave out religion, there are moral, political, social, and domestic obligations from which none are free. You cannot do wrong to yourself without doing wrong to others. You must help or hinder them. You make harmony, or you mar it, like a false note in an organ. Legally, no doubt,

every man has a perfect right to lose his money or to waste it, to fool himself to the top of his bent, to reduce himself to that detestable condition of idiotic imbecility which Hogarth has drawn so wonderfully in the last scene of the "Rake's Progress;" but he can never have any *right* to do wrong to others, to injure those dependent upon him, those who have claims upon him, which none dispute. I remember hearing from my father of his painful astonishment and righteous disgust when, on the stand at Doncaster, and just before the St. Leger was run, he heard the representative of an ancient and honourable family, a large landed proprietor in a midland county, exclaim, "Now it's——" I will not name the estate, but say, "Now it's home or no home." A few minutes after, he had lost all hope of retrieving his property; it was sold to a stranger; and to this day his descendants have suffered in exile and in poverty the result of his selfish folly. And this is only a sample from the bulk. Since those well-known lines were written fifty years ago—

"The stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand,
Amid their tall ancestral trees,
Through all this pleasant land!
The deer across their greensward bound,
In shade and sunny gleam,
And the swan glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream!"

how many of these grand mansions have been sold and let and mortgaged because their owners would gamble and bet! I saw recently one of the most

extensive and ornate of these edifices. The roof and large portions of the floors had fallen in, the doors and windows were gone, and the rank weeds were growing where "tapers gleamed and music breathed, and beauty led the ball"—

"No human footstep stirred to come or go;
No face looked out from shut or open casement;
No chimney smoked; there was no sign of Home,
From parapet to basement."

And all this desolation and ruin because the owner had gambled and betted. At the same time, we may not forget that in all classes of society, as well as in the highest, a similar injustice, as cruel though not so notorious, the same misery and degradation, though the area of suffering is not so large, are inflicted by gambling and betting in the professions and trades, and among those working men, who lose a week's wages on a race, whose wives come to them on a Saturday night and say, "There's no more tick to be had, and the children are crying in the fireless room for food."

In brief, these vices seem, wherever they prevail, to induce more swiftly and hopelessly than any others, hard, reckless, cruel selfishness. The selfishness of a miser is contemptible, but it is laudable generosity in comparison with his who wastes that which is not his own. There's an old story of a very rich man in this neighbourhood, who, when he was invited to act as churchwarden, took some little time to consider the matter, and then informed the

petitioners that "he had made up his mind that if ever he did ote for note," (aught for nothing), "he thought he should do it for sen." I pity that gentleman, but I abhor the gambler.

It is an argument very commonly urged for racing, that it greatly improves the breed of horses. We need not discuss the question whether it would not be possible equally to improve the breed of horses by trial, by selection of the fittest. I never heard that Lord Ellesmere raced those magnificent stallion cart-horses which I have seen at Worsley, and which would require jockeys of twenty stone weight to steer; but, accepting the statement, and giving all honour to those men who have acted upon it—such men as the Duke of Westminster, Lord Falmouth, the Duke of Portland, and others—I would ask, How many of those who bet upon races ever think of improving the breed of horses? They improve him! Why, he's infinitely the more noble, a thousand times the more beautiful, animal. I have loved him ever since I rode a rocking-horse; and I could have told that fellow-traveller to whom I have referred, and who asked, "What can parsons know about horses?" of many who, like myself, had tested their wonderful power and pluck over the clays of "the Rufford," the walls of "the Heythrop," the huge fences and green pastures of "the Quorn." What's the horse to him but a machine for making money? There is not a single point of resemblance between them, unless it be black legs!

I know, of course, that there are scores of highly educated, honourable noblemen and gentlemen, distinguished for their public services, dutiful and blameless in their private life (as those whom I have just named), who regard racing as a pleasant recreation and a manly sport, who never gamble, and bet little, if they bet at all. *O si sic omnes!* for, if all were so, the racecourse might be a place of healthful enjoyment and of genial intercourse; and I, for one, should rejoice to hear of working men going there by thousands on their holidays; but until they can go without seeing that which they should not see, and hearing that which they should not hear, the impudence of the harlot, the disgusting degradations of drunkenness, the profane oath and filthy conversation, the attempts to rob and to cheat—until then, all who have the true welfare of those working men at heart must bid them in God's name to keep away.

I would not abolish racing, but I would have far more done than is done to abolish rogues—to expel those who despoil and disgrace humanity; men who, having in many instances abilities which would have made them prosperous and useful, concentrate their mental faculties on “morning tips,” “to-day's betting in London,” “latest scratchings,” and “midnight odds,” and who seem to think that the faculty of speech has been bestowed upon them that they may scream and yell therewith, “I'll lay 5 to 1 bar 1,” or “10 to 1 bar 2.”

They have but one subject of thought and conversation. John Leech told me that he travelled more than a hundred miles with two members of the fraternity, who had just come from the racecourse, and that one of them repeated the same observation to the other, with slight variations and a profusion of profane embellishments, Leech thought, about fourteen times! The remark was this, "As soon as ever that 'oss came into the paddock, I says to Bob, *U.P.*" Then after a brief silence, or after he had smoked or slumbered, he would resume his story, "As soon as ever he come into the paddock, I know'd they'd got him." Only once did he enlarge his reminiscences so far as to repeat the rejoinder of his friend. "And Bob said" (and it is pretty evident from Robert's language that he belonged to our County Palatine of time-honoured Lancaster—I say *our*, for I am a Lancashire lad)—"and Bob said, 'He's welly bossen'd.'"

He's a poor creature, wherever you find him, the man who does nothing but gamble and bet—whether he's playing cards in his club on a lovely summer's afternoon, or shooting dove-cote pigeons out of a trap for money, or whether he's trying to overreach his juniors (often little more than boys) in the tap-room of a public-house, of which in too many instances the landlord is a professional betting-man.

The epitaph on the clumsy maid-of-all-work might be repeated upon the man who is all *play*—"Nihil tetigit quod non fregit." She broke everything she

touched. He has spoiled racing, and he is trying to spoil boating, and football, and cricket. Oh for the good old times, when the nearest approach to gambling upon the close-mown turf was that of Fuller Pilch giving some friend a sovereign, to be repaid a shilling for every run he got!

And now, if gambling and betting are thus degrading and disastrous, "of all habits the vilest," as Ruskin writes, "because they unite nearly every condition of folly and of vice," and, so far from exaggerating, I have purposely abstained from several details, with which, as he who drew Priam's curtain in the dead of night, and told him half his Troy was burnt, or like the Fat Boy, when he gave notice, "I'm agoing to make your blood run cold," I might have produced sensational excitement; if I have spoken facts, which you can not only endorse but amplify, is it not our duty as Christians, as patriots, and citizens, to denounce these evils, and to unite in prayerful, thoughtful, practical efforts to expose and to expel them?

These attempts should be made in no intolerant or disdainful spirit, but with that charity which hopeth and endureth all things, though it be repelled with insult. While we enforce vigorously and impartially those wise and just laws which the State has enacted for the protection of the weak, and for the punishment of their assailants, and ask such further powers from Parliament as may seem to be required, we must rely far more on moral than on legal

restraint, far more upon conviction than coercion, far more upon kindness than severity, far more upon patience than anger, for progress and for victory. Indeed, these gamblers, though they may despise and even curse our compassion, are of all men most to be pitied. Though they seem to be so free from care, to come in no misfortune like other folk, so lusty and strong, so boisterous in their jocund glee, even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

No men verify more signally the prophetic warnings, "Be sure your sin will find you out;" "The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices make whips to scourge us." We clergy know how inevitably the time comes to these men, as to all who have persistently done despite to the Spirit of grace, when they must think and suffer and "loathe themselves for the evils which they have committed." What men are so exposed as these to disappointments and reverses, to the sadness and the sickness which attend inseparably upon wild excitement and excess? How many have felt that which Mr. Greville has written in his "Memoirs"—"While the fire is raging, while the odds are varying, I can neither read nor write, nor occupy myself with anything else"! And again, "Thank God, the races are over! I have had all the trouble, excitement, and worry, and have neither won nor lost. Nothing but the hope of gain would induce me to go through *this demoralizing drudgery*,

which I am conscious reduces me to the level of all that is most disreputable and despicable, for my thoughts are eternally absorbed in it. Jockeys, trainers, and blacklegs are my companions. It is like dram-drinking—having once begun, I cannot leave it off, though I am disgusted all the time with my occupation. There is something in it all which displeases me, and I often wish I was well out of it. I always feel ashamed of the occupation, and a sort of consciousness of degradation and deterioration from it.”

Happy they, who not only despise this servitude, but break its bonds asunder, and cast away its cords from them.

It seems to me, to conclude, that there are two primary and indispensable elements of success in a crusade against gambling and betting, *example* and *sympathy*. The beacons of war must be kindled on the mountains. The officers must lead the attack.

Noblesse oblige: a true nobleman, a true gentleman, should not condescend to take money from one whom he despises, money which has been obtained he knows not how, the loss of which may have caused ruin and disgrace. It seems to me that no true nobleman, no true gentleman, should pay large sums of money and have nothing to show for it—money with which he might have relieved want and encouraged industry; might have gained “the blessing of him that was ready to perish, and caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy.”

Cæsar, like his wife, should be above suspicion;

but if he fraternizes with the suspected, the world will say, "Noscitur a sociis," "Birds of a feather flock together." The legislator must be the last man to suggest the accusation that there is one law for the rich and another for the poor; that you may gamble and bet as you please at the club, but not in the public-house; that you may play for hundreds, but certainly not for half-crowns. A magistrate must not by any inconsistency provoke the sarcastic smile or wink behind his back of the policeman who receives his instructions. Tall men should brush their hats. If the public clocks of the Town-hall, the Infirmary, and the Church (representing the three professions of law, physic, and divinity) go wrong, where shall the citizen set his watch?

Then I would appeal to that mighty Hercules, the common sense (*consensus*) of public opinion, not to abolish, but to ablute the Augean stables; to Jupiter Tonans, the Thunderer, the press, not to advertise "tips," nor even "morals," to ignore the "odds," to allay the irritation of midnight "scratchings," and not to obstruct the pavement with a crowd of loafers waiting to know whether they have lost or won their money instead of honestly earning it; to Mars and to Neptune, the military and naval magnates, to discourage gambling and betting among their subalterns; to Mercurius, the chief speakers, not only to denounce these vices in Parliament, from pulpit and platform, but to demonstrate to their hearers the more excellent ways of honourable and useful employment. I would

entreat Vulcan, all who have power in the factory and at the forge, to come down upon this evil like Nasmyth's hammer upon a nest of rotten eggs; and I would beseech Venus, our fair English damsels and dames, to withdraw their presence from the shooting of pigeons at Hurlingham or the plucking them at Monte Carlo.

We want more sympathy and less selfishness. We want union of hearts as well as union of trades. We want co-operation, which means something more than "Divi." We want more mutual respect and less mutual recrimination, more talk face to face and less behind each other's backs. Then we shall find that we have all of us our temptations and difficulties, and may combine in overcoming them. We should follow the example of the elder Wilberforce. "I have always tried," he said, "to see some good in my fellow-men, and have never failed but twice." When we see others in error, let us remember the wise words of à Kempis, "If thou canst not make thyself to be what thou dost desire, how dost thou expect another to be exactly to thy mind?" Wherefore—

"Speak gently to thy brother;
Thou yet may'st win him back,
By kindly word, and deeds of love,
From misery's thorny track;
Deal gently, for thou oft hast sinned,
And yet may sinful be;
Deal gently with thy brother,
As God has dealt with thee."

Not only speak, but *deal* gently. If gambling and

betting are so injurious, the question which we have to answer to-night is, What are we doing, what are we going to do, to repress them? Hypocrites and cowards only cry, "How foolish they have been; they'll be drowned; they'll be burned! How I wish I could help them, but nothing can be done!" Brave men man the lifeboat, and go up the ladder through the smoke. It's all very well, as far as it goes, to tell a poor fellow that you are sorry that he is starving, but it is far more "gradely" to send him a leg of mutton. We all deplore epidemic disease, but wise men and kind men not only send the doctor and the nurse, but they look to the drains, that they may prevent as well as cure. They go to the springs that they may purify the whole stream, instead of filtering it by the pint. A drunkard said to a philanthropist reproving him, "Come and live in our court, and you'll soon be glad of the whisky." So with gambling and betting. While there is no excuse for those who have healthful homes and occupations and amusements, the plea may certainly be urged by those who have them not; nay, in too many cases have but a small share in those free gifts which are meant for all—fresh air, pure water, and clear light. "We do not profess," they may say, "to be admirers of gambling and betting, we are not blind to the harm they do, but what do you propose in their place?" I am a gardener, and I know that if plants have not a good soil, light, and air, they will quickly be infested by grubs, mealy-bugs, aphis, and all manner

of flies. So with men: if they have not healthy homes, honest occupation, or social amusement, they will be attacked by parasites, by companions who will induce them to drink, to gamble, and bet.

In the interesting book called "Social Arrows," Lord Brabazon writes, "A Manchester magistrate of my acquaintance told me that, on taking his seat for the first time on the bench, a boy was brought before him charged by the police with playing pitch-farthing in the streets. The magistrate expatiated on the evils of gambling, and suggested to the lad that some amusement, such as marbles, might be substituted. Having dismissed the boy with a caution, the magistrate ordered the next case to be brought forward, when, to his astonishment and confusion, he found that it was a similar one, only that in this instance the unfortunate child had been taken up by the police for playing the very same game which he had recommended; was told that such games caused obstruction to traffic, that children playing in the streets were a public nuisance, and thus became liable to the law." So that the Manchester street-boy resembled that flying-fish on whom the albatross pounces if he leaves the water, and the dolphin pursues beneath it.

What was the result? A consummation devoutly to be wished in every similar case. It was evident to the magistrate that, if these lads had a playground for healthful games, he and they would have been spared that painful interview; and, more than this,

because "the boy is father to the man," and we all need some recreation, that it would be well if the people had their playgrounds also. He acted upon his impulse, and from that hour gave thought and time and money in his anxious efforts to improve the homes and the amusements, the health and happiness, of his fellow-men.

Why, were it only a matter of expediency, of pounds, shillings, and pence, surely common sense should teach us that if we would have men to fight the battles and do the work of the nation, we must keep them in good condition. You must keep your machinery clean, and oil it now and then. Over-ride your horse, and he'll spring a sinew. Give him regular exercise, a roomy stable, sweet hay, and a few old beans now and then, and he'll neither jib nor kick over the traces.

But we must have higher motions than these. Social and commercial interests may be admirable allies, but they cannot win the victory by themselves. Religious conviction, the witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, Christianity, alone can instruct us, empower us, constrain us, to contend against that which is evil in ourselves and in others.

Yes, I am sure that Christianity alone can impress us with a sense of these obligations and bring us the power to fulfil them. Religion alone can enable us to convince others, as we are ourselves convinced, that gambling and betting are degradations of the redeemed and regenerate man, vile abuses of those

gifts and energies which were given us for nobler ends, and miserable failures to find happiness, where, sooner or later, there is but sorrow and shame.

Alas! this curse had never come to us had we but been true children of the Church—of the mother who taught us, as soon as we were able to learn, “*not to covet nor desire other men’s goods*, but to learn and labour truly to get our own living, and to do our duty in that state of life, to which it shall please God to call us.”

XVIII.

THE CHURCH AND DISSENT.

A TRUE desire for unity can only exist in the hearts of sincere and earnest Christians, who have learned something of the mind which was in Him who prayed that we might all be one; and, therefore, in our considerations of reunion between the Church and Dissent, we must leave out all mere professors, formalists, and partisans. We must eliminate, on the one hand, all those who are Church-people, mainly because papa has a pew; who go to church once a week—hebdomadal Christians—to keep up appearances, “for the sake of the young people and the servants, you know;” who go because landlords, and employers, and customers, and genteel people, and carriage-folk will be there; or because the Church is a national institution, and it is their solemn conviction that if they do not patronize it now and then it must decay, dissolve, and, like the baseless fabric of a dream, leave not a rack behind. And, on the other hand, we must decline to notice those who are Dissenters from social and political, but not from spiritual, motives. We must refuse to listen to any

railing accusations from one side or the other; to the intolerant parson, who tells his people that the first Dissenter was Cain; or to the Baptist leader, who, in speaking recently of the Churches of Ireland and England, compared them to Ananias and Sapphira, and foretold a like destruction. No, we must "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from us, with all malice;" and then, when this high and holy ambition, the reunion of Christians, is prayerfully, tenderly studied and discussed by those who love the church or who love the chapel, only because they believe in their hearts that in the church or in the chapel they can comprehend more clearly "the truth as it is in Jesus"—then, and then only, can we await in sure and certain hope the promised benediction of God.

All earnest Christians hate strife and yearn for peace. It is the unstable and the insincere, not having the faith, nor the courage, to give their life to God, who are loud in controversy, and try to believe that they are religious, because they are ever denouncing the weaknesses and protesting against the mistakes of others. It is these men whose counsel, like Moloch's, is for open war, who delight in magnifying the differences between Church and Dissent, who say to all men, "Be avenged of your adversary," instead of "Sirs, ye are brethren." At the Church Congress, the other day, one of the speakers told us, that in passing through the streets

he noticed a crowd of boys, evidently influenced by a great excitement, and he found on inquiring that they were anxiously instigating two of their companions to fight. So he addressed himself to the principals for whom a duel was proposed, and asked them, "Do you want to fight?" and when they promptly answered, "No, sir," then said he, "Don't," and they didn't. They shook hands, to the disgust and dispersion of those truculent young rascals, who shouted for the battle.

And this suggests a question, serious and sad—Who shall be first to hold out the hand of friendship? The answer is plain as painful—The one who provoked the quarrel, the Church of England.

Let me speak of facts within my own experience. In my boyhood and early youth I never even saw the man to whom had been entrusted the spiritual charge of the parish in which I lived. He did not reside in the same county. A curate had lodgings five miles away, and came to us once a week for one brief, cold, heartless service. My memory recalls him as he stands, with his overcoat, hat, and riding-whip upon the Holy Table, asking from the sexton whether there were any infants to be baptized (at home, of course, in a pudding-basin), or any dead to be buried in a churchyard, which was the village playground, and where horses were turned out to graze. The sparrows twittered and the bats glided silently overhead, the beetles crawled over the damp, broken floor below; prayers, canticles, psalms, were

read by the parson and his *vis-à-vis*, the clerk, only; and then, as you have seen at a circus the active horseman drop his outward raiment, and suddenly assume a new costume and character, so was the surplice hastily doffed, and the preacher gave us a sermon, old and dingy as the gown in which it was preached. There was no visiting, no teaching, no almsgiving, no sympathy, no love. The shepherds ate of the fat and clothed themselves with the wool, but they did not feed the flock. Was it strange that the sheep should wander, when the fold was unguarded and the pasture bare? Was it strange that men who felt that they had their souls to save, and had found a Saviour, should exhort and encourage one another, and should assemble themselves together where they could, because the temple of the Lord was closed? I say the memory of those men is blessed; and, though you may affirm that their successors in many instances have not their devoted piety, that they seem very often to be influenced by prejudice rather than by principle, and that in these days, when the Church is awake and putting on her strength, they cannot plead the same just motives for separation, I say, instead of being deluded by Satan—instead of hating those whom she has wronged—instead of denouncing and deriding, the Church is bound to regard Dissent with shame and humility, to pray with all her heart, to ponder with all her mind, and to work with all her might and means, for reunion with those whom, had she been faithful

to her trust, she would not have alienated, estranged, and lost.

And, again, it must be remembered that in addressing Dissenters you accost them by a title which they do not own. They will tell you that they are constant to a religion in which many of them were born, and that they believe in it as firmly as you believe in yours. Or perhaps they may say that you may call them Dissenters, if you please, inasmuch as the history of religion is the history of Dissent, the East from the West, England from Rome, Geneva from England, Protestant from Catholic, Nonconformist from Churchmen; differences of administration, they may argue, but from the same Spirit. And though you feel sure that they are wrong, and that disunion is wrong, is there not yet another consideration which should make us very gentle, very careful, when we are tempted to reproach or reform? I mean the consciousness of dissent between our own will and God's will, the voice of the prophet sounding in our ears, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God."

Of this I am quite sure, that while all denunciations, all demands of allegiance, all satire, however caustic, all mere controversial arguments, will repel rather than attract, that spirit of humility which recognizes a wrong and seeks to repair it, will evoke the sympathy for which it prays and works. It may be despised by the arrogant, misunderstood by the ignorant, mistaken for weakness, for cowardice, for deceit, by the suspicious; but it will be appreciated

by good and generous men. Though the enterprise seems sometimes hopeless, and we sigh, "I labour for peace; but when I speak unto them thereof they make ready to battle;" if we will only "let patience have her perfect work," if we will only "learn to labour and to wait," though we may not see in this world the results for which we toil (and we are but as men clearing the ground from ruins, that others may rebuild, but as men ploughing and sowing, breaking up fallow ground), be sure that there shall come hereafter, in the good time of the Almighty, first the blade and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. God encourages this faith and hope. At a mission which I conducted no long time ago in this diocese, only two or three Dissenters attended our first services; but when, in one of the addresses, I expressed the views which I have expressed to you on the spirit in which, as it seemed to me, the Church should regard Nonconformists, they came in numbers; indeed, the last night of the mission (Sunday) they closed their chapels, that all might come to it. Nor can I refrain, though I be accused of egotism (and yet how can one prefer facts to theories, or relate our experience, without it?), nor can I refrain from repeating a compliment paid to me by a worthy old Wesleyan, when he remarked to the vicar of his parish, for whom I had been preaching a harvest sermon, "They tell me he's one of them Romans, but I like to hear the man." Why? because our hearts were united by their love of the

Lord Jesus; "and this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

But while history and conscience teach us humility, they bid us also to be honest, and loyal and brave. They repeat to us the words which Bishop Phillpotts, of Exeter, addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury: "My lord, no good ever yet came from the sacrifice of truth to peace." They warn us that when great cracks break out in our walls and ceilings, it won't do to daub with untempered mortar, and paste a pretty paper over, and say, "How nice it looks!" but we must strengthen the foundation of the house. Let us be sincere, candid, outspoken to each other; let us not waste our breath and our soap in blowing bubbles which so quickly burst, but let us utilize them in earnest pleading for the truth, and in washing our hands and faces. Don't let us deceive one another with false notions that separation is strength—(behold how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, *not* to dwell together in unity), and that every man may do that which is right in his own eyes, if it seemeth to him to be right. Oh, beware of that easy and greasy benevolence whose text is, "It does not matter," "there lives more faith in honest doubt, believe me, than in half the creeds;" because so many love not the truth well enough to contend earnestly for it. Men talk about concessions of Church principles and Church property; they are not ours to concede.

Let me briefly illustrate my meaning, both as to principle and practice.

So long as the Church of England tells us, in the preface to her Ordination Offices, that "from the Apostles' time there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church, bishops, and priests, and deacons," and in her twenty-third Article, that "it is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent," we Churchmen are bound to maintain that there are three Christian orders in the Church, and that "a religious community is not duly and fully a Church without them."

Let us follow the example of our heroic chief,* and not be ashamed of our faith. We shall be called bigots, sacerdotal despots, and the like, but we shall induce thoughtful men to make inquiries, and some to think with us. The Bishop of Lincoln's pastoral to the Wesleyans was denounced as narrow-minded and repellent. But what has been the result? Out of sixty-three students who have entered the Theological College at Lincoln, with a view to taking holy orders, ten have come from the Nonconformists, of whom seven are Wesleyans, and these have stated that many others would follow their example were they not prevented by difficulties which arise, not *in foro conscientiæ*, not from spiritual, but from social and financial, sources.† Churchman or Nonconformist,

* Bishop Christopher Wordsworth.

† The bishop wrote, in acknowledging a copy of this paper, "By a remarkable coincidence, it came to me with overtures from three Wesleyans, asking Ordination in the Church."

let us say what we think. When we had a meeting some two years ago in the town of Nottingham, as to the reunion of Christians, an esteemed member of the Baptist Communion told us cordially and truthfully that the chief difficulty presented itself in this question of government. "For example," he said, "I call myself a bishop." I admit that this difficulty is a gigantic hindrance and discouragement, so great as to make any corporate return of the sects for the present hopeless; but it is well to know what the difficulty is, and if we have only faith in our Church we shall move mountains.

I have spoken of the spirit in which, as it seems to me, we Churchmen should regard Dissent. May I offer to you, in conclusion, a few short suggestions which are, I hope, of a practical character? Church-people should read, and should be taught by pastors and parents, the history of the Church, and her claims as the ancient Church of this land upon their obedience and love.

Ask the first dozen men you meet why they belong to the Church rather than to any other community of Christians, and you will be favoured in many cases with arguments which a clever Nonconformist would demolish as easily as your little brother puffed down in childhood the card house of which you were so proud. And Churchmen should acquaint themselves with the reasons why Nonconformists do not conform, and then, instead of sneer and ridicule, and the notion that Dissent springs only from the

spirit of opposition, there will be, towards those who are true to their principles, respect and a desire to conciliate. The Church should extend her ministrations and her means of grace among the classes with whom Dissent has its chief influence. We need large churches, free and open. We want services solemn, reverent, devotional, but bright and simple and short, to which working men can go, if they please, before and after their work. We want our churches to be not houses of prayer only, nor houses of preaching, nor houses of music only, but that which so many churches profess to be, but are not, "places of worship." Places of praise and thanksgiving from the hearts of men, who know that the Lord is in His holy place, who know that the King is on His throne, who feel His Holy Spirit in their souls, who are sure that with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, they laud and magnify the glorious Name, who believe and realize the communion of saints.

A few words specially as to preaching.

A man who only reads other men's sermons, has mistaken his vocation—he is too idle, too ignorant, or too insincere to preach. Dr. Döllinger said to Mr. Gladstone, "Depend upon it, if the Church of England is to make way, and be a thoroughly national Church, the clergy must give up this preaching from written sermons." I believe that all honest men could do this efficiently; because, in the words of one of the most impressive of modern preachers, "I think it no extravagance to say, that a very inferior sermon

delivered without book, answers the purpose for which all sermons are delivered more perfectly than one of great merit, if it be written and read."

And why not more preachers? Why should not laymen be authorized to preach as of old, as the Franciscans? The bishops could empower laymen to preach, just as Alexander of Jerusalem licensed Origen, before he was in Orders, not only to teach but to preach in the catechetical schools of Alexandria. If not in churches, in mission-rooms, schoolrooms, and wherever else they please, so that in church and out of church the poor might have the gospel preached to them—not that vague, undefined, mysterious gospel which so many talk about but so few explain, which means anything or nothing, but the gospel in its purity, as our Lord preached it. "When thou doest thine alms—when thou prayest—when thou fastest—Do this in remembrance of Me;" "If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross and follow Me;" "He that doeth the will shall know of the doctrine;" "I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat."

Preaching His words, and following His example, we must draw nearer to each other, as we draw nearer to Him, because (remember this above all things), if we follow His example, we shall pray for unity; and this we can all do, Churchmen or Nonconformists—we can pray that He would gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad. Yes, if in a spirit of penitent humility, and yet with a courageous faith, if striving earnestly to redeem the past, to teach

the truth, to preach the faith once delivered to the saints, if bearing one another's burdens, those burdens which oppress us body and soul, we pray that we may be, like the multitude of those that first believed, of one heart and one soul, in His own good time and way He will give us our heart's desire ; and in that battle between good and evil, faith and unbelief, Christ and Antichrist, which is ever raging around and in us, the Church of England shall regain the alliance she has lost, by proving that she has the right and the power to lead.

XIX.

ON THE CAUSES, THE CONDUCT, AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.*

I. THE CAUSES OF SIN.

“A CERTAIN man had two sons, and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me.” And in these words we read that primary cause of sin which has brought so much shame and sorrow to all sorts and conditions of men, so much ruin to body and soul—discontent—discontent with home. With a kind, affectionate father; with abundance—bread enough and to spare; with servants to minister to all his wants; with youth, and health, and strength; with few responsibilities and cares; yet was he discontent. What was the cause? Whence blew that chilly wind into the warm atmosphere of love? Whence rose that gloomy cloud which cast its shadow on the sunshine of his morning life? Did some malignant voice whisper in his ear that the gentle rule of his father, the regular and innocent routine of his daily life, was

* These addresses have been published in *Good Words*, and are reprinted by permission.

irksome and monotonous ? Was he jealous of his elder brother ? I dare say that brother was not so kind as he might have been, for we read further on in the history that he was ungenerous and hard. But with all his temptations—and, of course, he was tempted, for Satan tempts us all—and with all his troubles, for it is a world of sorrow, he had far more to make him joyous than sad. The lot had fallen unto him in a fair ground, and not in the dry desert, not in the bleak wilderness of life. Why, then, was he not content ?

Alas ! is it not within our own experience how the fretful craving for something, which we were forbidden to have, moved us to do evil—to take that which was not ours, to say that which was not true, to do that which we knew was wrong ; the first act of impurity, the first of intemperance ?

When we review the past, when conscience says to memory, “Thou writest bitter things against me, and causest me to possess the iniquities of my youth,” how many of these sorrowful regrets may be traced to a fretful discontent ? What a shadow it casts even upon the sunny days of childhood, to remember how impatient we were with those who loved us so dearly, how we presumed on an affection which could never tire ! We think upon the past, look upon some letter, some photograph, some work that was done by a vanished hand, hear some song that was sung by a voice that is still, stand by some sacred grave, and we sigh to ourselves and say, “Oh, how unworthy I was of all that tenderness ! how I vexed

that anxious sympathy! how I tried that gentle endurance! how obstinately, how selfishly, I held on my stubborn way, though I saw the anguish of that loving soul, when it besought me, and I would not hear!"

The *pride*, which makes us wise in our own conceit, is largely blended with this spirit of impatience and a primary cause of sin. How many have said with this younger son, "I am not appreciated here in this quiet place, this dull home out of the world. I have talents, and I would have them admired. I am nobody here, only a subordinate. I want more liberty and independence—to be my own master, to go where I will, speak as I like, do as I like. Why should I wait for the portion of goods which falleth to me? Why should I not enjoy it now—amid new faces and new scenes, with gay friends and merry companions of my own age and tastes?"

To discontent and pride must be added *curiosity*, that subtle source of so much deadly sin. For there arises amid plenty a new appetite, a mysterious craving for something, at first we know not what. It casts a shadow upon the pure, sparkling rivulet of boyhood, which darkens as the stream grows broad and deep. It is the accursed longing, inherited by every child of Adam, to have some experience of sin, to taste the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. So this younger son would go into the world and see what its pleasures were like. Some, it may be, who had already devoted themselves to these pleasures had excited his envy, as he had seen

them, "pride in their port, defiance in their eye;" always rejoicing, as it seemed, in loud and reckless merriment, in such prosperity (as the Psalmist saw them), and coming to no misfortune like other folk. They had sneered, it may be, at his dull, secluded life. They even tried to persuade him that it was unmanly, and something to be ashamed of, not to have any knowledge of gratifications which were so natural and so common. Why should he be different from others? Why should he set up to be a saint? Religion might be all very well for the old and the sickly, for women and priests, but what had it to give to him? Perhaps they told him that "youth must have its fling"—profane and foolish words, as though God had made sin a necessity, or as though there were no noble ambitions, no brave preparations, no manly recreations, to occupy the mind of youth.

Perhaps *love of money*, that root of all evil, was in this, as in countless cases, a cause of sin. "Give me the portion of goods that falleth unto me." Did he long to count the silver and gloat upon the gold? Money—we know that it has with some a marvellous attraction—the rustling of the crisp, clean notes to the rich, the gleaming coins to the poor, for its own sake as well as for that which it can buy. There is no such slavish idolatry as that of money, which loves the bank-book better than the Bible; and the worshipper is well named *miser*—miserable.

What practical lessons may these thoughts leave with us?

That those who have the blessing of a home, where hearts are of each other sure, where there is plenty, and where there is peace, should thank God heartily and often for the most precious of all earthly possessions, for "the only happiness which has survived the Fall." That they should pray that He will continue this precious heritage to them and to their children, remembering how much depends upon themselves. That they who hold rule in a household mainly, but all the members individually, make or mar the happiness of a home. Persistent selfishness in any form—idleness, greediness, sullenness, jealousy, disobedience—like a false note in an instrument, will spoil the harmony.

Charity, which begins at home, means more than the love of children. In the home where there are servants it remembers that "God is no respecter of persons;" that one soul is just as dear as another to Him, who died for us all; that we are all servants of one Master.

Charity is not bounded by brick walls. You may do something to make other homes happy as well as your own. You may help the weak, visit the sick, and comfort sorrow. Do you ever try?

II. THE CONDUCT OF SIN.

Not many days afterwards he gathered all together. Not many days; for lust, when it hath conceived, quickly bringeth forth sin, and sin quickly bringeth

forth its first and worst influence—*selfishness*. There was still some hesitation. The voice which always pleads so distinctly, so persuasively, until the ears are dull of hearing that they cannot hear, said, “Do not go. Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil men.” Who has not heard it? “It is not yours; do not take it. It is not true; do not say it. It is cruel; it is deceitful; it is profane; it is impure and unclean; oh, do not do it!”

What hindrances and barriers hath God set up between the soul and sin! As the arteries in our bodies are protected by the greater bones, so hath He made safeguards for the souls of His elect. Who has not some experience how, when he was going, like Balaam, against God’s bidding, upon some unrighteous errand, an angel met him in the way? Even when the struggle with temptation was over, when the spirit had surrendered to the flesh, and it seemed that the opportunity had come, and the sin was inevitable, God saves from the jaws of death. The voice of a little child in the distance has saved men and women from deadly sin.* The smile upon a mother’s picture has stayed the hand of suicide.

But he had made up his mind to do evil. So, not many days after, he gathered all together. Indeed,

* “A little child’s soft sleeping face
The murderer’s knife ere now hath stayed;
The adulterer’s eye, so foul and base,
Is of a little child afraid.”

it must have been a sorrowful sight to see that wayward, wilful boy—for he was hardly more—flushed and excited, hurrying to and fro, claiming all that he could, regardless of the feelings, of the discomfort of others; and then turning his back upon parents, kindred, companions, all the old haunts and associations of his life, without a tear or sigh of regret, rather congratulating himself that he had gathered all, got as much as he could; and so, little thinking that he left behind him all that was really precious—love, purity, and peace—with his own hands he flung away the rope which held him to that peaceful, happy shore, and drifted into unknown seas.

He took his journey into a far country. Is not that always the way of sin, to get away from the friends and guides of its youth, and from the proper sphere of duty? First it frets against the dulness of home; it is sullen and disobedient, and then, when reproved, rebellious. “I can bear this slavery no longer,” it says; “I can endure this cant no more. I will not be scolded and preached at. I will go into some far country where there is freedom, where I can do that which I desire to do.”

He who is at enmity with himself, with his better self, is at enmity with God and with goodness. The very presence of religious persons is hateful to the depraved; the mean man shuns the generous; the idle slinks away from the industrious; the drunkard from the temperate, because vice cannot endure the

company of virtue: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness? and sin loves darkness rather than light.

And then in that far country, a land in which, as writes St. Augustine, the sinner, God forgetting, seems to be by God forgot, "he wasted his substance in riotous living." There was no restraint upon him now. None to admonish, plenty to admire, he was "lord of himself, that heritage of woe." So he not only lost all sense of modesty, prudence, temperance, but he began to glory in his shame; to fancy that there was something high-spirited and generous in extravagance and waste—to be the favourite (as he thinks) of some depraved woman, who will leave him when he has spent his all.

They made him believe, as thousands before him, and as thousands now, that he was the prince of good fellows, the leader of his set, the life of his company; and so in riotous living and with harlots he wasted his substance.

So that younger son *took all the goods that fell to him, and wasted them.* He gathered all together, and then scattered it to the winds. The money, which for years had been accumulating for him, which had been earned, it may be, by honest industry, which by a prudent use might have been amplified, have brought him all the comforts of life, and been bequeathed to his children's children—it was all spent; not only spent, but wasted. No return; nothing to show for

it; not a house, not a field—all gone; as utterly lost to him as though he had sunk it in the sea. With some of that gold, for ever vanished, what kindly deeds he might have done! He might have encouraged industry, rewarded merit, helped those who could not help themselves; the blessing of him that was ready to perish might have come upon him, and he might have caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. He had wasted it all in wild drunken revelry with harlots.

It was not only his money he had wasted; it was his substance—all that he had; his being, his time, his very self—"all the gifts of nature and of grace." Look at that marvellous picture by Hogarth of the "Rake's Progress," and you will see the helpless, hopeless prostration, physical and mental, the miserable degradation, vainly trying to hide itself beneath a feeble idiotic smile, of the ruined spendthrift.

A wasted life! God forbid that any of us in reading this history should deceive ourselves with this notion, that there are no prodigals but those who give themselves to sensual indulgences, to reckless extravagance, to riotous living with harlots. There are countless Christians, whom the world appraises as "highly respectable," who break no laws and make no enemies, but who are living wasted lives, doing absolutely nothing for their souls, their Saviour (as they call Him), or their fellow-men; they waste their *time* in idleness, and because they do no positive harm they try to think all is well. They forget that if

land is not ploughed and sown it brings forth weeds of itself. They waste their *money*. They pay their debts and all that comes against them, as they say; and because there are many neighbours in debt or dishonest, they are satisfied, and never deny themselves that they may give to others. In vain the great Judge Himself has revealed to them that He will welcome to His glory those only who for His sake have done works of mercy. We waste our high gifts of thought and reason on continuous debates upon small subjects, futile speculations upon mysteries which we cannot solve, ill-natured sarcasm, literature which teaches us nothing. But it is written, "Thou shalt serve the Lord thy God with all thy mind;" "His testimonies shall be thy study;" "Let this *mind* be in you which was in Christ Jesus."

III. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN.

The consequences of sin, as sure to follow as the night the day. Wisdom crieth aloud, "Be sure your sins will find you out," but ignorance will not believe.

Who has not had some experience of this accursed fascination? Taught, entreated, threatened, it seems as though nothing but experience would convince. "Youth on the prow, and pleasure at the helm," the sky so cloudless and the sea so calm, we hear the siren's song; we will listen only for a while, and at a safe distance; but as we listen, smoothly and swiftly the vessel drifts towards the rock.

We will only look into the garden of forbidden fruits, just to see what they are like, and return; and they are so pleasant to the eye that we go again to gaze; and they look so good for food that we touch and taste, and when we find that they are sweet and luscious, not bitter or poisonous, as some had said, we devour them greedily. There seems no danger and no harm. So we begin to think, either that we have been frightened unnecessarily by our conscience or by our counsellors, or that the offence is so trivial that God takes no notice.

And I would remark here that parents and teachers sometimes make a great mistake when, right in purpose but wrong in policy, they seek to deter their children and their pupils from doing evil by assuring them that sin is *altogether* a disappointment; that the fruits, of which I spoke just now, though fair to the eye, like the apples of Sodom, are *at once* ashes in the mouth; that Satan has no pleasures to give to his dupes, and that the punishment of sin is manifest and immediate. It would assuredly be more wise and kind to tell the whole truth to the young; namely, that, though sin ever promises more than it can perform, in gratifying the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, it has great and sensible delights. That they may continue to enjoy it for a season, and may walk for years in the light of its fire, and in the sparks that it has kindled, and may seem to prosper, and even to come to no misfortune like other folks, *but* that there never was

an exception to the result of which the prophet speaks—"it shall lie down in sorrow"—it may be in bodily abasement to be scourged by the whips of their early vices, in mental abasements of loss, dishonour, and remorse, or (God grant it for Christ's sake !) in the abasement of a penitent soul.

But the fears of temporal penalties deter very few from sin ; the world laughs at them, the flesh forgets them in the fruition of its lust, the devil disputes them. The only *fear* is that of death and the "something after death"—of that retribution of which God has given to His creatures, in all times and places, an instinctive awe and expectation, which will restrain from wickedness.

But the fear of the Lord is only the beginning of wisdom, and our Father, our Saviour, our Holy Teacher, gives us an infinitely more persuasive and potent motive to keep our souls from sin. It is love. We love Him because He first loved us ; the love of Christ constraineth us ; the first fruit of the Spirit is love ; and so we come to love that which God loves, and to hate that which He hates. For one sinner *scared* from his sins, a thousand are *led gently* by the tender pleas of mercy.

And so to that young spendthrift of the parable the hateful degradation and indigence of sin was to suggest the brightness and generosity of his father's love. When he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Of whatever gifts the waste may have been, whether the

rich man has wasted thousands, or the poor man pounds ; whether the learned has wasted his opportunities of teaching, or the ignorant his opportunities of learning ; whether the orator has been eloquent for a bribe, or the artist has profaned his art, or men in authority have abused their power ; by whatsoever road men have wandered from their heavenly home, in whatever way they have misspent their heritage, sooner or later comes a famine into the soul, and they begin to be in want. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and in the ways of thine heart and in the sight of thine eyes ;” set parents at nought, ridicule religion, speak evil of dignities ; nay, waste thy substance, thy strength, thy beauty, thy mind, thy manhood, thy soul, with harlots, “but know thou that for all these things God shall bring thee into judgment.”

Yet he hesitated ; he lingered on the scene of his sin ; he went and hired himself to a citizen of that country, as gamblers who have lost all have been seen doing menial service in the place where their ruin came. Still he lingered, as when the Jews went back to Jerusalem after their captivity, some who had fallen into idolatry having intermarried with the women of Babylon remained behind, and are still found in the modern town of Hillel, which stands within the circuit of the ancient city. And he was sent into the fields to feed swine. Picture him, this younger son, who in purple and fine linen had fared

sumptuously every day, waited upon by others, now in his faded finery feeding swine!

He who was discontented amid all the comforts of home is exposed to the heat and storm; he who had abundance would fain satisfy his hunger with the husks which the swine did eat—would prey on garbage, past feeling, giving himself to work all uncleanness with greediness.

“And no man gave to him.” Sin is too selfish to make lasting friendships. The worldling will patronize, or will cringe to you, so long as you can minister to this selfishness, or lead it, but when you lose this power it leaves you. “Confederacies of vice and leagues of pleasure” ignore the absent, and

“He who has but tears to give,
Must weep those tears alone.”

Surely it is one of the saddest experiences of life to note, in our visits to the sick and to the sad, how rarely the boon companions of the club or the tavern come to see the brother in adversity, and if they come how powerless they are to comfort. Society has no ambulance, no sisters of mercy for those that fall in its service. 'Tis “Let the stricken deer go weep, the hart ungalled play.” There is the sound of a pistol-shot, and a dead man lies in the gardens of Monte Carlo, but the music and the play go on.

And when he came to himself—to his real self—to reason, to conscience; for he had been living “beside himself,” “out of his mind,” as we say. Mere selfish-

ness, worldliness, sensuality, not only lose the power, but the wish, to exercise the nobler faculties. As disease weakens the physical powers until fever comes—delirium—it may be death, so sin impairs the perceptive faculties, specially the discernment between good and evil, until all that is divine is destroyed, the grace of God turned into lasciviousness; the soul, which was made for heaven, given up to the evil spirits of carnal lust—to madness.

For sin is madness. Always in the sight of God and His angels “the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live.” No lunatic in our asylums so mad as he who is resisting and defying God. In His sight always, as when the prophets wrote it, men are “mad upon their idols”—man’s applause, woman’s love, more gold, new honours.

Sin is madness. “It is the nature of sin, not only to defile, but to infatuate.” It gradually incapacitates head and heart from spiritual apprehensions, until no argument convinces, no terror alarms, no tenderness softens. “They hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”

For a time the sinner will defend his sin. He will dress it, and disguise and mask it. He will give it false appellations. He will call lust, love; waste, generosity; licence, liberty; cheating, shrewdness; meanness, economy; fear, prudence; deceit, diplomacy. So he comes *first* to lose his dread of sin, *then* to

like it, to delight in it, to make it his idol. The girl who blushed to hear an immodest word hath no more shame than Jezebel; the boy who started in horror when he first heard the profane oath hath "opened his mouth in blasphemies against God," and hardly knows when he utters them. Presumptuous sin hath got the dominion over him. He is even as a man that hath no strength. *He is mad.* How commonly do we hear, as the explanation of some great crime, he was "mad with drink," "mad with jealousy," "mad with rage"!

But this poor prodigal, by God's mercy, came to himself—came to his senses. First his eyes were opened, the eyes which Satan had blinded so long, and *he saw himself.*

He thought of his home, its plenty and its peace, and while he was thus musing the fire kindled—that sacred fire, which had well-nigh gone out in the temple of the Lord, his heart—and at last he spake with his tongue those momentous words, "*I will arise, and go to my father.*"

"*I will arise.*" There is grand music in the words—life, action, the man in his manliness, in his full strength and stature, erect, resolute, ready to do his best. "*To rise*"—we use the word of all who merit and who win success; the boy rising in his school, the young man rising in his office, business, profession; the soldier risen from the ranks, the student taking a high degree, the commoner raised to the peerage.

"*To rise,*" what is it but to fulfil the glorious pro-

phesy—"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles"? Thither in heart and soul continually ascending, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before.

"And he arose, and came to his father." For his was a true repentance. He knew that from that far country to his home there must be a long and painful journey. Every place he passed would remind him of his wicked, reckless waste. There would be many to ridicule, many to dissuade, and at the end humiliation, it might be scorn and rejection. But in his sorrow and shame he would go.

A true repentance. It seems strange at first that in this nineteenth century, which talks so much of "the Bible, and the Bible only," we should hear so seldom of repentance, of which the Bible is full, and so often of conversion, of which it speaks so sparingly (the word itself occurs but once in the Holy Scriptures, Acts xv. 3), and which has never the meaning so commonly given to it now.*

Ever since the plague of sin came into the world there has only been one cure—repentance, the sorrow which hates sin because God hates it, and escaping from it, by the way which He reveals to faith by His Son, finds pardon and finds peace.

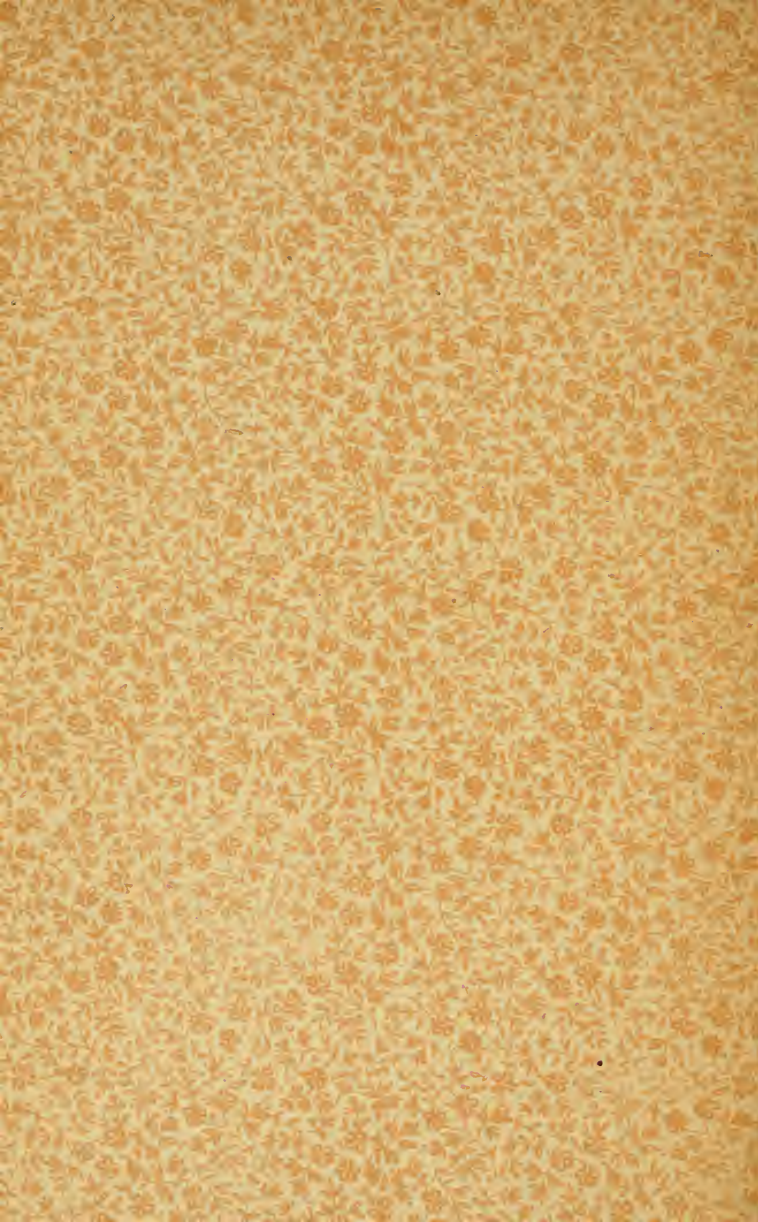
But this repentance means the humbling of one's pride, the mastery of our passions; it means the bearing one another's burdens; it means a watchful, prayerful, pure, brave, truthful life. And we shrink

* See Address V., on Conversion.

from the acknowledgment that we have done foolishly and dealt wickedly, that we have lost our way, and must retrace it; that we have spent our money on that which is not bread, and our labour for that which satisfieth not; that we must take down all that we have built, or it will fall upon us and crush us, and must begin from the ground again.

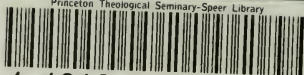
So we shrink from repentance altogether, or we are deceived by counterfeits; we crave our Father's forgiveness, we long for the peace of home, we loathe the husks and the swine, but the journey is too great for us.

May God give us the Spirit that prompted Paul to say, "I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize." True penitents must ever feel that they are strangers and pilgrims hurrying home. They rest, but they cannot lounge or loiter. The voice, which first scared them with tones of terror, "Escape for thy life," is ever calling to them, "Come up higher," and they are constrained to answer, "I will arise, and go."





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